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Rice University, Ph.D., 1972
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Sociocultural Change
in a Scottish Crofting Township

by

Susan Parman

A THESIS SUBMITTED
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

Doctor of Philosophy

Thesis Director's signature:

Edward Norbeck

Houston, Texas

May 1972

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FOREWORD

122 The research on which this thesis is based was made possible by a grant from the Foreign Area Fellowship 114 Program. Research was conducted from June, 1970, until October, 1971.

000 Among the many individuals and organizations that were extremely helpful, I would like especially to thank Miss Dorothy Soderlund and Mr. James Gould of the Foreign Area Fellowship Program; Mr. Eric Cregeen and Miss Morag MacLeod of the School of Scottish Studies in Edinburgh; Mr. Roger Bland of the Scottish Land Court; Mr. Gordon Adams and Mr. Alastair Munro of the Highlands and Islands Development Board; Mr. Halley of the Crofters Commission; Mr. D.J. Mackay and Mr. John Murdo Morrison of An Comunn Gaidhealach; and Mr. Patrick Guiton, Mr. Finlay Macleod, Mr. Norman MacDonald, Miss Susanne Barding, Mr. Charles Macleod, Miss Pat Swannie, Mr. W. Mathieson, Mr. Alastair Fraser, Mr. Gordon Gair, and Mr. Alec Murdo Morrison.

Special thanks are due to Mr. Robert Storey, that summum bonum of pivotal nodes in a vast network of contacts, and to his wife, Lisa.

I would also like to thank my teachers and advisors at Rice University, Professors Edward Norbeck, F.C. Gamst, M.E. Sheldon, Ronald Provencher, and the late Mary Ellen Goodman.

000 My deepest thanks go to the occupants of Shawbost, whose hospitality, humor and humanity can never be adequately portrayed or repaid. Although the names [128] of the village and its subdivisions have not been disguised, the names of all persons referred to in the text have been changed.

I would like to dedicate this thesis to a wise and empathetic social philosopher, my friend, E.T. Jacob-Pandian.

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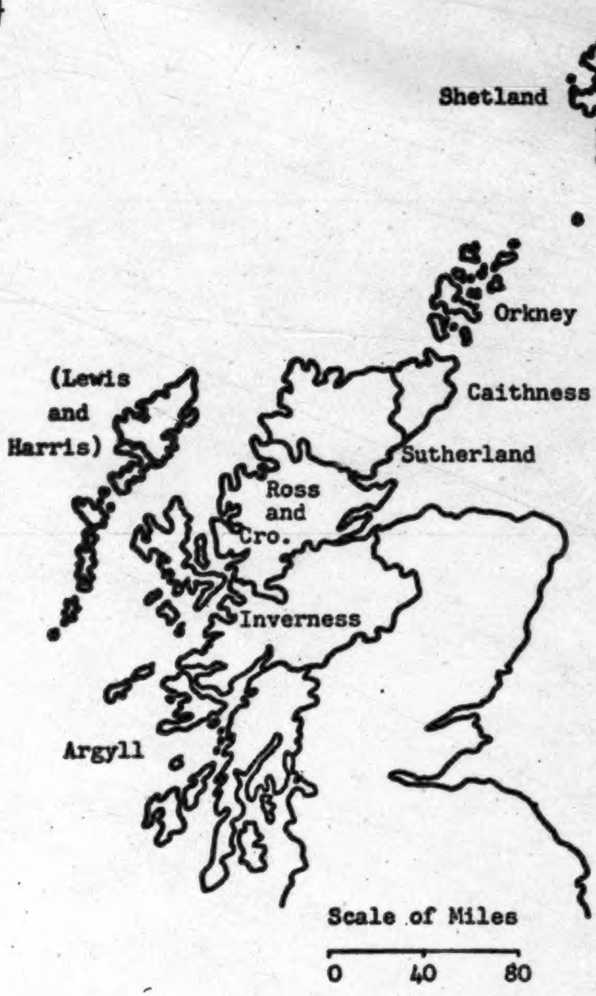
Map A

102
131
634

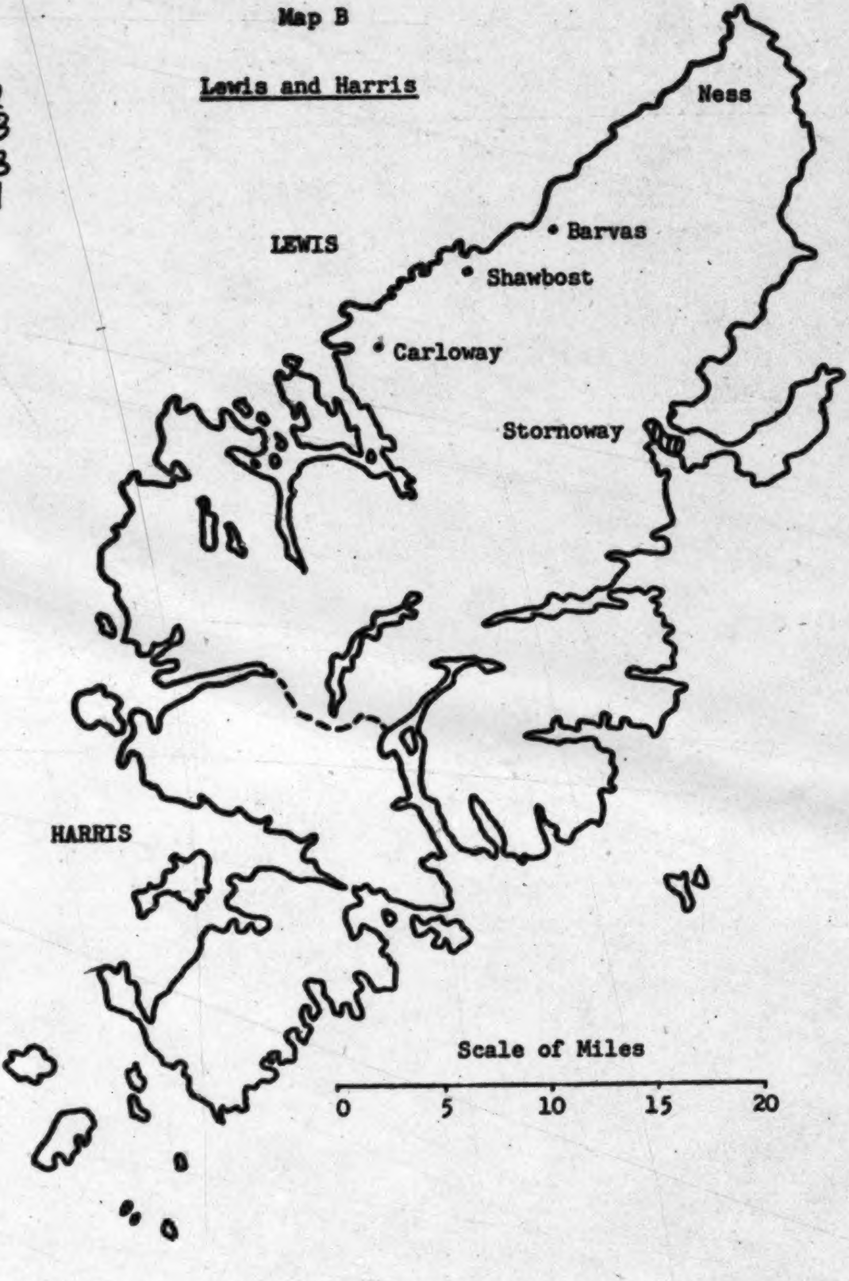
The Seven Crofting Counties of Scotland


Shetland
Orkney
(Lewis
and
Harris)
Caithness
Sutherland
Ross
and
Cro.
Inverness
Argyll
Scale of Miles
0
40
80

Map B

Lewis and Harris

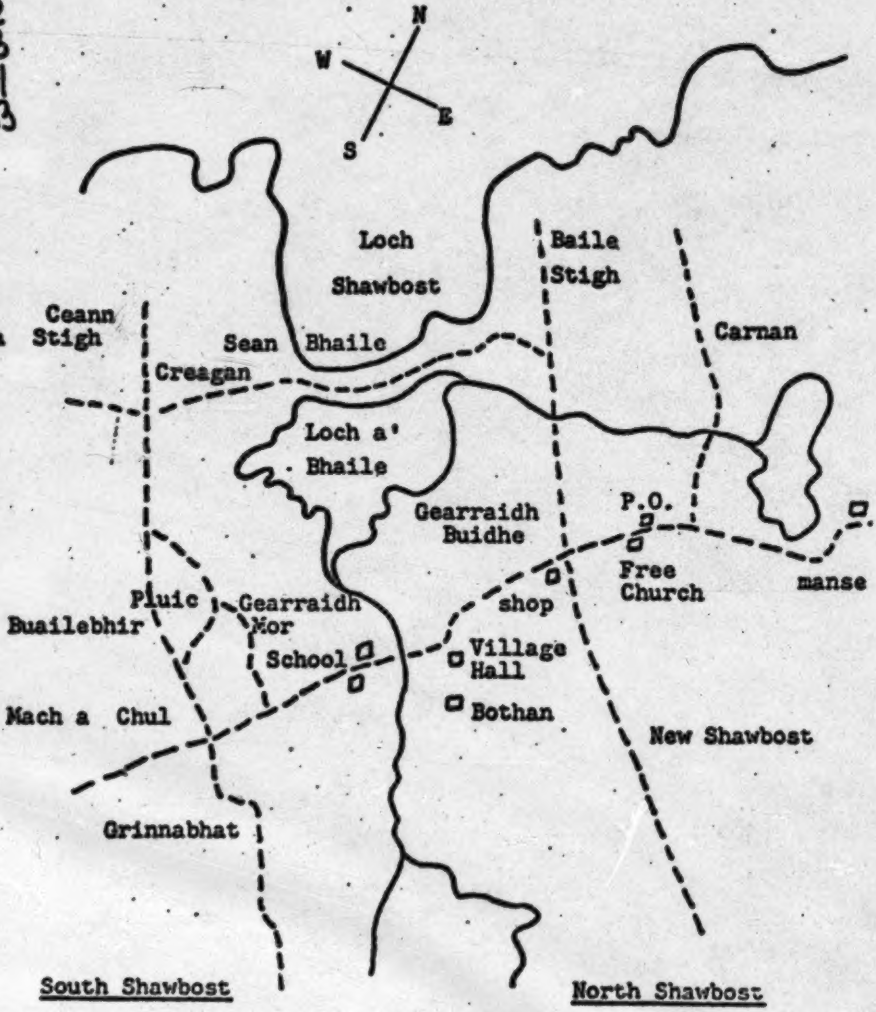
102
103
133
361


Ness
LEWIS
Barvas
Shawbost
Carloway
Stornoway
HARRIS
Scale of Miles
0
5
10
15
20

Map C

The Village of Shawbost

102
133
361
363

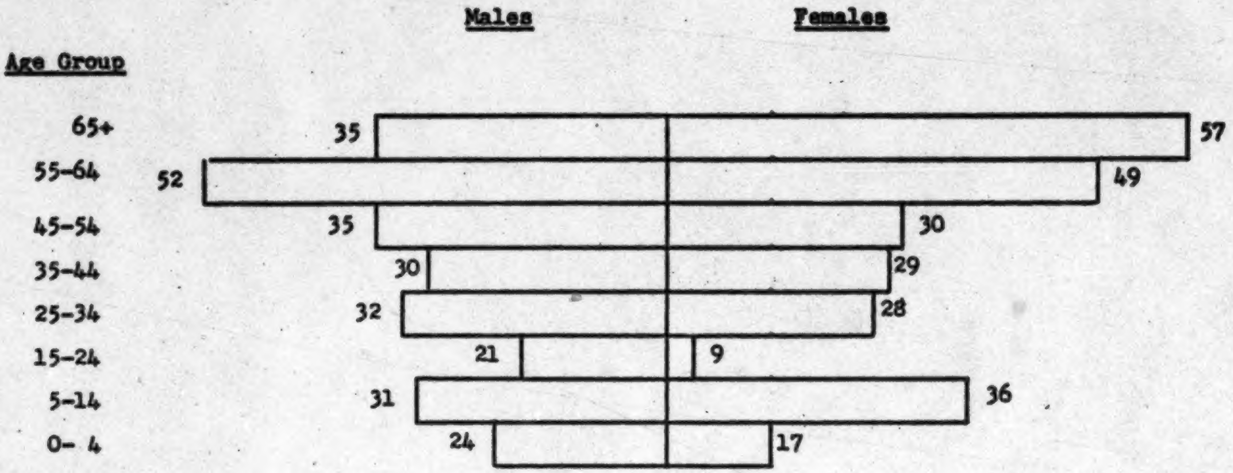

N
W
E
S
Loch
Shawbost
Baile
Stigh
Carnan
Ceann
a Stigh
Sean Bhaile
Creagan
Loch a'
Bhaile
Gearraidh
Buidhe
P.O.
Free
Church
manse
shop
Pluic
Gearraidh
Mor
Buailebhir
School
Village
Hall
Bothan
Mach a Chul
New Shawbost
Grinnabhat
South Shawbost
North Shawbost

(Adapted from the Ordinance Survey Map, 1964.
Scale: roughly 3" per mile.)

Table I

Shawbost:

Population According to Age and Sex



162

Table II

Comparison of Age Groups in Shawbost with Age Groups in Rural Lewis

	0-14	15-44	45-64	65+
Males	55	83	87	35
Females	53	66	79	57
	108	149	166	92
% Both Sexes	20.9%	28.9%	32.2%	17.9%
Rural Lewis[1]	20.3%	28.0%	30.6%	21.1%

---

[1] Study done by the Highlands and Islands Development Board in 1968-69.

178
231
243
244
311
433

Table III

Parish of Barvas, Isle of Lewis:

Agricultural Statistics, 1870-1970

(Scottish Record Office, Edinburgh)

	1870	1881	1891	1902	1911	1921	1931	1941	1951	1961	1970
Potatoes (acres)	856	875	1105	1280	1146	1126	1043	679	576	413	144
Barley (acres)	854	1486	1172	1226	959	1149	823	401	94	14	1.5
Oats (acres)	920	530	556	728	1107	1039	2045	2451	2327	1432	486
Milk Cows	1605	1992	1771	1949	1951	1932	1846	1544	1295	960	451
Beef Cattle								50	47	1273	760
Sheep (in thousands)	16	16.4	17.7	19.9	19.5	16.9	21.3	22.7	41	37	35

1x

232
242
311
178

Table IV

Isle of Lewis:

Individual Apportionments and Township Reseeding Schemes, 1960-1969 (Crofters Commission)

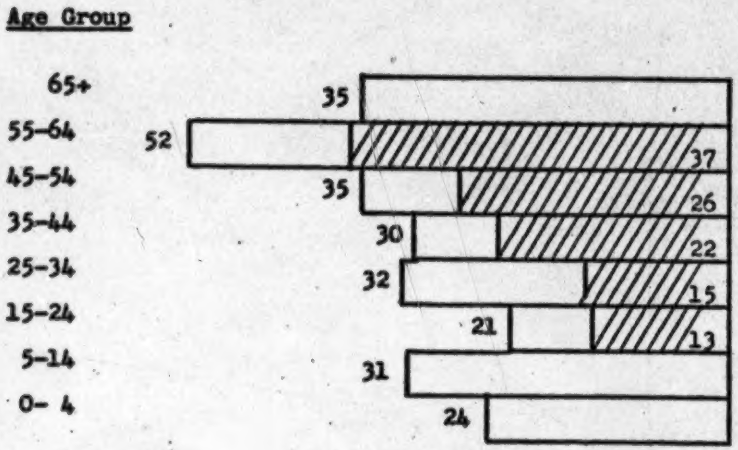
	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969
Township Schemes:	30	29	38	17	4	8	4	4	3	2
Apportionments:	1	22	32	34	22	30	49	42	43	64

288
286
462
162

Table V

Shawbost:

Proportion of Male Weavers



Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

648
0143 Scottish crofting townships in the Outer Hebrides, in which I did anthropological fieldwork for fourteen months in 1970-71, participate extensively in the political, educational, economic and administrative systems of larger British society. 181 Despite this participation, the township presents various anomalous features, i.e., features which are inconsistent with what we would expect given our conceptions of the conditions of a modern, urban-industrial nation-state. The expectation that township members will manifest values and beliefs congruent with those prevalent in larger British society, and that patterns of economic specialization and individualization will be found among persons working in the available industries, is not fulfilled. Crofters continue to work small plots of land and engage in communal township activities even while employed by large industrial firms. Distinct patterns of value and belief persist, and are evident even in the use of new ideas and material goods.

121 This thesis attempts to describe and interpret the seemingly anomalous survival of crofting and crofting

121 communities. The township is described as a "social boundary system (Cohen 1969)." The maintenance of firm boundedness under modern (urban-industrial) conditions is examined and related to economic and religious conditions and the status of the Gaelic-speaking population as a minority group vis-à-vis the larger society. Changes which have occurred over the past 100 years in the social boundary system of the township are examined by using the concept of "strategy."

Various authors (cf. Barth 1963, 1967, 1969; Brox 1968; Paine 1965 and n.d.) have used the concept of strategy to describe sociocultural change in communities which are marginal to and dependent on larger industrialized societies. A strategy may be defined as a pattern of choice-making in an environment characterized by various constraints and incentives. According to Barth (1963: 7),

> Statistical regularities or patterns in the behaviour of a population, as well as institutionalized patterns (i.e. the general acceptance of the expected patterns), may be expected to result where a set of external factors limit choice and in conjunction with a certain set of evaluations define clear strategic optima. Or put differently, where many persons act in a similar manner one may expect that they agree on certain relevant evaluations and regard their own behaviour under the prevailing circumstances to be optimal in terms of these evaluations.

This is not to say that features of sociocultural organization are caused by the free decision-making of

[121] individuals; rather, causal primacy in human action is given to the sociocultural environment, which determines what choices are available to be made and what behavior is valued. Because the exercise of choice is a human universal, i.e., a constant, it cannot be used to explain variation (cf. Barth 1966).

Actors within a community which is marginal to a larger industrial society make choices within an environment characterized by constraints and incentives which derive from both the local sociocultural system and the larger system. The state of boundedness of the local system is maintained or modified as a result of the strategies adopted by its members. I have suggested that the Scottish crofting township persists as a relatively strongly bounded system not because it is inherently static, isolated, or resistive of change, but because of the constraints and incentives stemming from the larger society. For example, the [657] British government has provided various incentives to [197] encourage the persistence of crofting and township [554] communalism; and to a certain extent, Gaelic speech or English spoken with a "Hielan'" (Highland) accent constitute social stigma (Goffman 1963) by which a person from the Highlands and Islands is assigned a somewhat lower social status in British social structure.

634 The Outer Hebrides, a chain of islands over a [131] hundred miles long which lie to the northwest of the Scottish mainland, are part of "Ross and Cromarty" and "Inverness," two of the seven crofting counties of Scotland (see Map A). The seven crofting counties [103] (Argyll, Inverness, Ross and Cromarty, Sutherland, Caithness, Orkney and Shetland) constitute the scenically beautiful but agriculturally marginal land often referred to as the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. 101 The word "Highland" also refers to features of social 197 life such as crofting tenure, strong community feeling and Gaelic-speaking which are characteristic of many communities in both the Highlands and Islands as well as in cities such as Glasgow in which persons from the Highlands and Islands have settled. For example, a Gaelic speaker whose parents came from the Islands and settled in Glasgow may be called a "Glasgow Highlander." The first four crofting counties listed above have a large percentage of Gaelic speakers. In the national [162] census of 1961, 82.3% of the 32,607 inhabitants of the Outer Hebrides were Gaelic speakers.

131 Lewis and Harris, a single body of land which is 133 sometimes referred to as two islands because the mountainous southern section called Harris differs markedly from the flat, northern moorland of Lewis, is the northernmost island in the Outer Hebrides (see Map B).

000 is the northernmost island in the Outer Hebrides (see
161 Map B). The population is concentrated along the
162
361 coast, like a hat-brim around the great inner core of the island's heather-covered bogland, a population belt classified as "dense rural" (50-400 persons per
[226] square mile) in a map based on the 1951 census. The pattern of land settlement reflects the importance of fishing in the economy of the island.

131 Lewis lies between 6°10' and 7°20' west longitude, and between 47°50' and 58°30' north latitude. Lewis
131 is as far north as Newfoundland and farther north than
132 Mongolia, but the temperature is mild because of the North Atlantic Drift, or Gulf Stream, which passes the
132 west coast of Scotland. The temperature averages 55°F. in summer, and 44°F. in January. A constant climatic feature of life on the treeless island is the wind, a relentless, insidious presence which often reaches gale force. Winds of 60 m.p.h. and more are common.

Rain, which comes in downpours or light mist,
[133] averages 55 to 65 inches per year. The water may be held in colloidal suspension with decomposed organic matter in the compact, spongy material called peat, or pour as rivers and streams off the island's shelf of
131 non-porous Archaean gneiss into the sea. Of Lewis'
133 total area of 437,200 acres, inland water comprises 24,863 acres.

000 24,863 acres. The value of this boggy property, as
423 far as the landlords are concerned, is determined by
427 226 its fishing potential. The landlords generally reside
away from their property, and brave the buffeting gales
several times a year to return to fish for trout and
[463] salmon. For the rest of the year they hire river-
[685] watchers to prevent their tenants from poaching. As
[171] in Wales (Emmett 1964), the islanders continue to poach,
in part as an expression of their identity as independ-
ent countrymen, a minority group in a nation-state.

161 Lewis is the most populated area in the Outer
162 Hebrides, containing 21,934 of the 32,607 Outer Hebrideans
634 numbered in the 1961 census. It is part of the County
of Ross and Cromarty, whose headquarters are on the
632 mainland near Inverness. Lewis has four administrative
areas called civil parishes in which births, deaths
and other vital statistics are recorded. Stornoway
[197] parish is the largest, containing the town of Stornoway
on the east side of the island in which many non-Gaelic
speakers live. Of the other three parishes, the largest
[162] is Barvas which stretches along the west side of the
[197] island and contains 4,331 persons, of whom 94.6% are
Gaelic speakers. The people of Stornoway refer to someone
[186] from the west side as a siarach (west-sider), a term
which connotes rusticity.

131 Lewis is about 40 miles long. The distance from Stornoway to the west side of the island is about 15
361 miles. Along a tar-macadam road through Barvas parish
491 from its northeast tip toward the southwest, about 18 villages are clustered along a relatively flat coast for as many miles until the land becomes hilly. The road then narrows and takes hairpin twists around blind,
361 stony corners. Villages become fewer, and nestle in protected coves or string haphazardly across the face of the hills.

Shawbost (from the Norse sja or sjo meaning "sea"
[632] and bost or bolstadhr meaning "dwelling" or "homestead"), a village in the parish of Barvas, lies on three low hills on the west coast. Shawbost is 18 miles from Stornoway on a circular route in which Stornoway and Shawbost are antipodes.

172 On the south side of Shawbost bay, huddled beside the sea strand, is a cluster of ruins called Sean Bhaile (the old village), believed to have been occupied over 200 years ago when fishing was important in the local
[348] economy. Banks of the streams are dotted with the ruins of old grinding mills and ovens for drying grain.
[312] Fresh-water springs are still kept clear of rushes, although water is now piped to most houses from a nearby
000 loch. Hundreds of place names are known to the villagers

Hundreds.
103 of place names are known to the villagers
[173] which are not marked on any map. These place names
constitute part of the oral tradition of a population
which has lived in a confined geographical area for
generations.

632 In most of Lewis, village and township coincide.
621 The village of Shawbost is composed of two townships,
311 South Shawbost in which the crofts splay outward like
423 a fan from roads which curve over an uneven landscape,
[363] and North Shawbost which is composed of linear streets
(see Map C), to which the crofts are perpendicular.
Each township has its own common grazing land, and its
own grazing committee. All of South Shawbost and part
of North Shawbost belong to one private estate (which
includes other townships to the southwest), and most
of North Shawbost belongs to an estate which extends to
Barvas. Beyond the fact that non-crofters in South
Shawbost have found it easier to acquire crofting status,
little difference between the two townships appears to
be due to their belonging to different estates. As
[427] elsewhere in crofting regions, the landlords of the
[529] two estates are concerned mainly with the sporting
potential of their land.

632 The two townships are themselves divided into named
neighborhoods (cf. Vallee 1955 for a discussion of
"natural neighborhoods" in crofting areas).

000 "natural neighborhoods" in crofting areas). The
363 northernmost street of North Shawbost is called Carnan
103 (carn = a heap of stones), and the street parallel to
it, by the loch and the sea, is Baile Stigh ("the town
within," i.e., in toward the sea. In everyday speech,
[196] one goes "in" to the sea and "out" to the moor, a
reference which probably derives from the days when
fishing was extremely important. The sea was then the
focus, from which the village expanded "outward." Today
the road is the source of goods and transport). Part of
the Baile Stigh is sometimes called Gearraidh Buidhe
(buidhe means "yellow"; gearraidh is the land from which
peat has been stripped). The Baile Stigh intersects
the main road and continues toward the moor, where it
becomes New Shawbost. New Shawbost, once called New North
Shawbost, is also called Pairc, referring to a farm which
existed there before the land was turned into crofts.

632 The neighborhood regions of South Shawbost are less easily
363 recognisable as the land is not divided into linear
103 streets. To the people of North Shawbost, South Shawbost
is simply Baile Thall, "the town over yonder." (Residents
of South Shawbost also refer to North Shawbost as Baile
Thall, but also frequently refer to the different streets.)
Within South Shawbost, several neighborhoods are
distinguished on the basis of the clustering of houses,

632 363 103 distinctive geographical features, and nearness to the sea: *Ceann a Stigh* (or *Ceann a Stigh Bhaile*, or *Baile Stigh*, the "town" at the "head" of the road "in" by the sea), *Buailebhir* (an area identified with the keeping of cattle), *Gearraidh Mor*, *Creagan*, *Pluic*, and *Mach a Chul* ("out the back," by a road built relatively recently). A street which leaves the main road and cuts into the moor, or common grazing land, is called *Grinnbhat*, from the name of a nearby loch.

511 [348] [288] [493] The presence of a large Harris Tweed mill in Shawbost has contributed to a high standard of living within the village. It is estimated that only 25% of the households of rural Lewis have cars; about 50% of the households in Shawbost possess them. In 1970 [342] Shawbost had only one occupied *tigh dubh*, or "black house" built of dry stone and roofed with thatch, which to many islanders symbolizes a past life of poverty and [404] [251] [207] [206] adverse times. Modern appliances such as refrigerators, deep freezers and electric toasters are common in Shawbost. Most homes also have television sets, and many have telephones.

288 463 The mill in Shawbost employs between 60 and 70 persons to dye, card and spin yarn, to prepare the yarn in warps which are then delivered to weavers who work in their own homes, and to darn, wash and market the

288 finished lengths of tweed. For a tweed to be classified
463 as "Harris Tweed," it must be hand-woven by Outer
[424] Hebrideans in their own homes, but the weavers are
288 essentially employees of the mill. All the large Harris
Tweed mills in Lewis, except the one in Shawbost, are
located in Stornoway. A few smaller businesses, which
design and market tweeds but have no elaborate machinery
to process the tweed further, are scattered throughout
the island.

621 The village of Shawbost is composed of 169 households,
162 of which 110 are headed by "crofters," persons recognized
[427] as legal tenants of a croft. Of the remaining 59
[361] households, 16 rent houses which were built and are
maintained by the County (called "council houses"),
11 have erected houses on the crofts of relatives, and
463 32 have built homes on the common grazing lands. Non-
241 crofters participate in the agricultural activities of
the township. It would not be unusual, for example, for
a non-crofter to serve as the clerk of a grazings committee.

342 In North Shawbost, one croft house and two non-
[166] croft houses are used only when the owner returns to
Shawbost from the mainland for a holiday. The school-
[875] master lives in a house adjoining the school, and the
[793] minister in a manse located between Shawbost and the
neighboring village of Bragar.

311 There are 144 crofts in the village (nine of
241 which, in South Shawbost, were added after the turn of
[175] the century by non-crofters encamped on common grazing
[429] land who applied to the landlord for crofter status).
Thirty-four (almost a quarter) of these crofts are
vacant; that is, the holders of the crofts live else-
[527] where. One of the vacant crofts is used by its absentee
[493] tenant for holidays, and one sports a trailer (called
[485] a "caravan" in Britain) which may be rented to tourists
during the summer. The rest are cultivated or used for
[428] grazing by crofters or non-crofters in the village who
[427] by inheritance or by formal or informal subletting have
gained use of the land.

241 A little over half of the crofts are worked as individual units; 44% of the crofts are worked as combined units of two and three. Twenty-four men have the use of two crofts each, and five men the use of three crofts each.

16 A feature of crofting townships usually emphasized is their disproportionately large number of aged people and small number of young people, who tend to migrate to the cities. An age-sex "population pyramid" of the Highlands is not a pyramid but a top-heavy hourglass (see Table I).[1] Most persons of child-bearing age have migrated from the area and the number of children is

[1] [See p.vii--Analyst]

16 accordingly small. In Lewis in 1970, 211 babies were
born, and 264 people died. In the 1961 national
census, Shawbost had a population of 598; ten years
later, the population was only 515. The significant
community of interaction, however, includes a much
greater number of people than are indicated by these
statistics, because the roles which absentee members
play in their community are important. The figures in
[877] Tables I[1] and II[2] do not include five males and three
females in the 5-14 age category or six males and three
females in the 15-24 age category who live away from
home during the week to attend schools in Stornoway,
but who return home during the weekend and for holidays.
[464] The statistics also omit eighteen males and eighteen
females in the 15-24 age category; fifteen males and
seven females in the 25-34 age category; four males
between 35 and 44, and two males and two females between
45 and 54 who are away from the village working but are
as yet unmarried. These temporary exiles return for
long or short periods of time, to weave or work in the
mill, to care for aged parents, and to vary their diet
of living until they become restless and set off again.
[521] Their roots are in the village, and during the times
when they are physically absent they are kept alive in
000 the electrical storm of the village gossip system. To

[1],[2], [See pp. vii-viii respectively--Analyst]

527
166
167

To many villagers, the concept of "holiday" has no meaning other than that time in the yearly cycle when the natives return.

Chapter 2

HISTORY OF THE CROFTING TOWNSHIP

A. "Crofting"

241
427
175
192

The word "croft," meaning an enclosed field, comes from Old English. In 1563, a rental of the bishopric of Moray mentions the lease of two crofts (Grant 1930: 272). Walker (1812: 51) refers to "cottars or crofters" as subtenants of Highland farms. The word croft appears in Gibbon's historical novel, A Scots Quair, and is still in common use around Aberdeenshire. In the Hebrides, a number of Gaelic words are used to refer to units of land (e.g., faich, fearann, fiadhaire, and fiannag), but the word for "croft" remains in Gaelic vocabulary as a foreign word, slightly Gaelicized as croit or lot (from "allotment").

[522]

A cynical definition of a croft, given by some academicians and administrators concerned with crofting, and supposedly first proposed by the son of a crofter, is "a piece of land entirely surrounded by legislation." Crofting, as a particular method of land use, was introduced by "progressive" landlords in the mid-18th

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241 427 175 671 century as an attempt to reform the previous system of run-rig; but it is usually identified with the definition given it by the Crofters Holdings (Scotland) Act of 1886, as a form of land tenure to which many protections accrue. The Act defined crofts and crofting areas in Scotland, and assured the crofter of security of tenure, hereditary succession and fair rent. The legislature which followed on the heels of this act, which is sometimes referred to as the Magna Carta of the Highlands (Day 1918: 190), is mountainous. The flow stems from two perhaps incompatible aims: the desire to provide security for the landholder, and to enhance agricultural productivity. The difficulty of developing the land as an efficient agricultural unit has always existed in an area characterized by a wet climate, unproductive soil, and smallness of holdings in heavily populated areas, and was one of the factors that prompted agricultural reform in the 18th century.

175 423 427 [614]

B. Stratified Tenantry vs. Egalitarian Society

At the time of the break-up of the clan system in the first half of the 18th century, three categories of persons held land under the Highland proprietor or "laird": tacksmen (gentlemen farmers, often relatives

175 423 427 of the landlord, with education superior to that of other tenants) who held a lease or "tack"; tenants who held no leases, or very short ones (when Fullarton and Baird made their report in 1838, tenants in the parish of Barvas had leases for five to twelve years, whereas tenants of the parish of Lochs held leases "at will," i.e., at the will of the landlord); and subtenants who had small parcels of land which were let to them from year to year by tacksmen or tenants in return for their labor, and who were called cottars or crofters (Walker 1812: 51), servants or scallags (Macphail 1916).

In 1718 and 1726, government commissioners visited Lewis, which had comprised part of the estate of the Earl of Seaforth. The Earl of Seaforth had sided with James VIII in the Jacobite rebellion of 1715, and was exiled from his estate. To facilitate the collection of rent, the commissioners sought to compile a list of the rents which had been paid by all the tenants. The 1726 rent roll listed 43 tenants in Shawbost who declared that "they have their present possession of the town of Shawbost for the sum of L224/16/— Scots money, 38 bolls one firlote meal, 12 stones butter and 12 mutton (Macphail 1916: 313)." The nearby village of Bragar constituted a

175 423 427 single tack, for which the tacksman, who was a relative of Seaforth's Chamberlain, paid L247/10/8, 10 sheep, 9 stones butter, and 3 bolls of meal. The Bragar rental mentions scallags who were not listed because they were not smallholders; rather, they worked for the tacksman for a certain number of days per week, in return for which they received ground to cultivate and on which they might build a house. There were probably scallags in Shawbost as well; a section of common land near the sea, which bears the marks of old cultivation, is today called Blar na Scallag (field of the scallags).

The evidence is that, rather than being the egalitarian society portrayed by many idealistic proponents of crofting society today, the society living in the area we now know as the crofting counties was composed of fairly differentiated tenants and subtenants. [103] Allotments of land were called penny, half-penny, and farthing lands (Walker 1812: 56; Gray 1952: 48); place names such as "Five-penny Borve" indicate this history of land tenure in Lewis. The 43 tenants in Shawbost in 1726 paid rents varying from L3/10/4 to L9/7/4 (Scots money, which was 1/12 of the English). The differences in rent gave them different shares in the arable ground and different shares in grazing rights on the common ground.

175 423 427 Thus some tenants were relatively more prosperous than others. A large class of subtenants (scallags) did corvée labor in return for a small amount of arable land and the right to graze a few livestock. Their land was intermixed with that of their masters in the prevailing system of run-rig. "Crofters" had economic standing similar to that of scallags, but had permanent, compact allotments (Gray 1952: 49).

C. Joint Farm vs. "Crofting Township"

[632] The 1726 rental indicates that the "town" of Shawbost was a corporate unit and thus that "crofting townships" have a long history. However, Geddes (1948) argues that the form of the 1726 rental was due to the method by which it was collected. In 1726, officials toured the island and made a list in large public hearings of the rents of those assembled, thereby attempting to make certain that no tenants were excluded from the rent roll. [464] [476] The major cooperative work unit seems to have been not the township but the joint farm, which contained enough men to make up a crew for ploughing and fishing.

171 175 241 427 In the Lothians and eastern Lowlands, the land could be worked in larger units than in the Highlands, and a

171 175 typical homestead or "farmtoun" consisted of a
427 "ploughgate" occupied by eight tenants, each of whom
241 contributed one animal to the common plough and thus
had an eighth of a share of land or one "oxgate"
(Grant 1930: 97).

175 In the Highlands and particularly in Lewis, about
427 four to six men and their families worked together and
241 [476] shared land which was held in run-rig. The Old
[407] Statistical Account (1796) lists 90 ploughs in the
parish of Barvas or about one plough per five families
175 (Geddes 1948: 57). Geddes maintains that joint tenants
427 paid an equal share of the rent and had equal "soumings"
241 114 (the number of stock allowed on the common grazing land).
233 In contrast, Walker (1812: 56) says that joint tenants
paid different rents according to the share which they
had in the arable land, and that the number of cattle
which a tenant had on the common grazing land was soumed
or proportioned to his rent; all the tenants worked the
arable land together, and received a percentage of the
produce which was appropriate to their share. Geddes'
description (1948) emphasizes equality within the joint
farm; Walker (1812) and Gray (1952) point to differences
between tenants and subtenants.

175 632 241 In any case, the "town" or township was not the effective work unit, but rather was the larger neighborhood in which several joint farms existed. [233] The tenants of several joint farms grazed their stock on the surrounding moorland (i.e., on common grazing land).

D. From Run-rig to Crofting

175 233 241 311 Run-rig was an agricultural system suited to a pastoral people, who required the use of open, common pasture for grazing their livestock; the arable land was limited, and of varying quality (according to Day (1918: 12), 54% of the land in crofting counties was mountain and heath used for grazing, and only 5% was arable land). [423] Residents worked several strips of different quality, and the strips (in drained beds of earth a few feet wide and many feet long called lazy-beds or fiannagan) were usually re-allocated every few years. [625] A "constable" acting for the landlord ensured that proper husbandry was maintained.

175 241 178 427 The joint farm, and the stratification of tenants and subtenants within the farm, disappeared as "progressive" landlords began, in the second half of the 18th century, to substitute compact holdings for the "mingle-mangle of dispersed strips (Gray 1952: 46)" 000 which characterized run-rig. Hamlets or clachans

175 Hamelts or clachans
241 (small clustered settlements) were broken up, and
361 houses were isolated on strips of land in linear,
178 single-street villages.

114 Gray (1952, 1957) argues that the main factor
178 behind the reorganization of land use in the Highlands was the progressive, individualistic, laissez-faire ideology of the 18th century. Grant (1930: 97) attributes the reorganization to the high demand for cereals which existed during the Napoleonic wars.
177 Highland landlords, who were very much in contact
241 with the society of the Scottish Lowlands, were influenced by agricultural practices there. The trend to change run-rig, which had once dominated the whole of Scotland, to fixed, compact holdings began in the Lowlands.

423 According to the "progressive" ideology of the
425 time, the giving of land to individual farmers in much
829 larger pieces than they had previously held would serve to stimulate agricultural development and give rise to a class of capitalist farmers. To give land to a relatively few people, however, meant the removal of a large number of tenants who had hitherto been able to survive under the system of run-rig.

175 Around this time, various factors had encouraged
[161] an increase in population. After Scotland's union
with England in 1707, the prohibition on the import of
cattle into England was lifted, and trade in cattle
became economically more important (Day 1918: 26).
The numerous wars of this period caused the price of
cattle to double between 1736 and 1766 (Day 1918: 180).
Clan warfare diminished; the potato was introduced;
and vaccine for smallpox became available.

175 The increase in population led to an extreme
161 crowding of land in some areas, which made agricultural
[166] reform difficult. Many landlords tried to encourage
tenants of their estates to emigrate. The appearance of
a market for kelp, which lasted from the middle of the
18th century to about 1815, discouraged landlords from
implementing policies of depopulation that would
175 diminish their labor force. An alkaline extract of
824 kelp was used in a variety of manufactured goods, such
323 as soap and glass. The seaweed was gathered by men,
388 women and children living along the coasts, and burned
in rough open kilns. Tenants who worked at this
[465] occupation received L3-4, and the landlords L18-20,
per ton (Mackinlay 1878: vii); the landlord received
as high an income as L10,000 to L20,000 a year from the
burning of kelp (Gray 1957: 42).

175 Factors which led to further crowding were the
423 development of industry and an increased demand for
427 wool in the south, which occurred when traditional
[161] ties between laird and tenant had been loosened. The clans had been disbanded after the Jacobite rebellions of 1715 and 1745; those landlords who had not forfeited their estates received huge sums of money as compensation for the abolition of hereditary jurisdiction. They had experienced travel and the luxuries of other countries, and were not eager to remain on their estates. They accepted the huge rents offered to them by sheep farmers to the south, and turned vast amounts of land into sheep tracts. Tenants
[361] were crowded together along the seashore, or lived on tiny holdings dispersed among the larger farms or on moorland, earning their living by doing wage labor.

175 Despite the factors which encouraged a high level
423 of population to remain on the land, proprietors
241 attempted to destroy the joint farm with its small,
178 dispersed holdings and collective rights. Run-rig
[656] agriculture was abolished in Argyll in 1776 (Day 1918: 180; Gray 1957: 49), and over the next 80 years it disappeared from the Highlands (cf. Gray 1952: 49-50), to be replaced by townships of compact holdings surrounded by undivided hill grazing lands.

175 178 241 423 Geddes (1948: 56) gives evidence that joint farms were abolished in Lewis early in the 19th century. Gray (1952: 50) says that by 1819 there was little run-rig left in Lewis. The factor's notebook for Breasclete, on the west side of the island, shows the destruction of clachans around 1850, and their replacement by linear townships.

175 423 427 632 178 In the Napier Commission's "Evidence" (1884) for the parish of Barvas, it was mentioned that the rent had been increased because of improvements made by the landlord, Sir James Matheson, between 1849 and 1852. Land had been drained and new townships created; and both old and new townships were lotted and rented in 1850 and 1851 (Napier 1884: 959). 175 361 423 427 178 The Ordinance Survey map drawn up in 1852-53 reveals several interesting features of Shawbost: "New Shawbost" has recently been laid out; and in an area now incorporated by only a few separate crofts on "Carnan," a cluster of houses appears, perhaps the clachan in which joint tenants lived, and from which they went out to farm their various strips of land, before Matheson reorganized the land in linear strips with dispersed housing. [314] [174] The peat banks in the Carnan area are almost exhausted, indicating a long period of settlement in this area.

175 It is ironic that the attempts by landlords to
423 initiate agricultural reform and develop capitalist
427 farmers led to a destruction of the differentiated
178 tenantry on the joint farms (cf. Gray 1952: 51-56), and a proliferation of very small units, none of which was adequate to provide a reasonable subsistence. These small units became fixed as individual holdings by the 1886 Crofters Act, and the only important distinction thereafter was between smallholders with security of tenure (crofters), and non-crofters who built homes on the common grazing land but had no specified rights. Although various agencies were established after 1886 to enable holdings to be enlarged, only in the last fifteen years have such possibilities between officially developed in the form of official subletting and individual apportionments.

17 By the second half of the 19th century, a trend
423 against laissez-faire was manifest in the writings of European scholars. As feudalism broke down, smallholders throughout Europe were being dispossessed of their land, which was then consolidated and enclosed.
171 In Denmark, legislation was passed as early as 1682 to prevent landlords from taking steps to increase the efficiency of their farm production by replacing the

171 three-field system with improved rotation methods involving consolidation of land. The Danish government feared that consolidation of land would have meant a reduction in taxes and fighting men.

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[166] The British government was faced with the same threat in the migration from the Highlands, as the Highlands had long been a source of good fighting men.

A reaction against the materialism of the industrial revolution developed in England as smallholders sold their land to large landholders to become laborers. [181] The Taylor Report (1954: 9) reflects the value which is still placed on country life by maintaining that crofting communities "embody a free and independent way of life which in a civilisation predominantly urban and industrial in character is worth preserving for its own intrinsic quality."

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[654] The various acts protecting smallholdings were also attempts to keep labor dispersed: to diversify and improve the use of land, and thus to increase Britain's self-sufficiency in food production. Various marketing agencies and subsidies were introduced around World War II to achieve such aims. Among the many agriculturalists affected by these encouragements emanating from the central government were crofters.

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731 In 19th-century Scotland, the cause of the Highland tenants and subtenants was taken up, as part of the trend of the times and because a series of famines occurring in the Highlands caught the attention of Britain. After the kelp industry was destroyed at the beginning of the 19th century, landlords maintained high rents on the assumption that the depression was only temporary, which caused tenants to deplete their capital by selling their cattle (Gray 1957: 38). A number of reports were published on the plight of Highland smallholders: Fullarton and Baird (1838), MacNeil (1851), Mackinlay (1878), and finally the Napier Commission's report of 1884 which was followed by the Crofters Holdings (Scotland) Act of 1886.

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656 The 1884 Napier Commission Report tried to resolve the conflict between the rights of the individual smallholder and the maintenance of agricultural efficiency in a situation which still had communal elements of social organization, by recommending an organization much along the lines of the old joint farm. The township was defined as a farm, or part of a farm, which was occupied in common or in division by several tenants. The township, seen as an agricultural unit, was to be given various immunities and powers by which to achieve

175 stability and improvement; e.g., an executive officer,
423 the Constable, was to be elected annually by the
656 community, and he would oversee various improvements in
the township (Napier 1884; Day 1918: 187-9).

175 However, the Crofters Act of 1886 did not make the
423 township a unit of local government. It was more
671 concerned with protecting the individual crofter's
rights than with the creation of a self-sustaining,
self-correcting economic unit. The Napier Commission
[656] had recommended the consolidation of crofts which were
[168] rented at less than L6 a year, and a policy of persuasion
by which the excess population would be encouraged to
emigrate or specialize as laborers, fishermen, and so on.

175 Instead, the 1886 Act provided security of tenure
423 for a large number of crofters, as well as a fixed fair
671 rent and compensation for improvements if the crofter
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[656] chose to leave the croft. These assurances, and the
creation of a variety of agencies (such as the Congested
Districts Board, the Crofters Commission, and the Board
of Agriculture) whose purpose was to encourage agricultural
improvement by providing funds, equipment, breeding animals,
seeds, advice and so on, constituted a set of incentives.
These incentives combined with a number of other factors
including improved transportation and the spread of

175 information via the technology of mass society to
423 affect the choices made by succeeding generations.
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178 For example, young people are able to leave the island
[464] and work in British cities or abroad, sending money
[457] home to sustain their aged parents who by law cannot
be removed from the croft.

E. Changing Land Use

311 Darling (1955) described the previous Highland way
175 of life as a well-adapted, ecologically balanced system,
182 in which proper use of land was attempted by limiting
the number of livestock, preserving a proper ratio
between cattle and sheep, and regulating the flow of
stock on the land throughout the year. Dikes (fences
of turf or stone) and drains were communally repaired
178 and cleaned. Although continuity with the previous way
311 of life is evident today, the overall picture is one of
[182] partial use, and misuse, of natural resources. Various
[654] advisors from government organizations and colleges have
been brought in to encourage effective husbandry and
land use.

1. Specialization and Individuation: The change from an ecologically adapted, internally regulated community in which land was used intensively for subsistence

178 purposes, to a community which, as an agricultural
311 entity, requires transfusions from the larger society,
is accompanied by patterns of specialization and
individuation. The following table (Table III)[1] of
agricultural statistics for the parish of Barvas
demonstrates the change, over the past 100 years,
from intensive subsistence agriculture to specialized
production. From a broad-based subsistence use of
the croft (as revealed by the number of acres cultivated
for barley, potatoes and oats; and by the number of
cattle, especially milk cows), there emerges a tendency
[231] toward specialized production. The number of sheep,
[236] which require less attention than cattle, has increased
[241] since the late 1920's when the weaving of Harris Tweed
[246] commenced in earnest; and around this time there also
occurs a differentiation in cultivation, between the
production of barley and potatoes (used largely for human
consumption) and the production of oats (used largely for
[231] feeding livestock). After 1931 agricultural returns
began to distinguish between beef and dairy cattle.
During the past ten years the number of beef cattle in
the parish of Barvas has increased.

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654 An important factor which crofters on Lewis now
take into account when making decisions about their

[1] [See p.ix--Analyst]

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654 continuing investment in crofting activities is the availability of various subsidies which, in the form of fencing grants, calf subsidies, and so on, are available to other agriculturalists as well as to crofters. The certainty of support which subsidy offers is important in the decision-making of crofters because of their generally fluctuating, low-level income, in contrast to the decision-making of farmers who keep sheep or cattle on a large scale. The latter are likely to be more affected by market prices. [648] Many Lewis crofters indicate that they would hesitate to support Britain's entry into the European Economic Community, despite the higher level of prices for beef, because their subsidies might be jeopardized. Subsidies can be important as incentives for specialized production, but do not themselves sustain crofting as a socioeconomic pattern. [178] And in general, despite the incentives, all agricultural production is declining in the face of more appealing alternatives available to the emerging generations.

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476 A decline in township communalism, or an increase in the individuation of agricultural practices, is another index of change in economic strategy. The fencing of individual land and purchase of personal farming machinery are everyday occurrences in the life

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476 of the normal capitalist farmer in the West; but in crofting areas, these practices reveal a strain between communal and individual tendencies.

a. Fencing:

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[417]
[333] Although run-rig was replaced by fixed, compact holdings, the method of animal husbandry was not affected until the land began to be fenced. A single dry-stone dike enclosed the township, keeping livestock on the moor and away from the arable land. In different parts [184] of the Hebrides, various types of herdsmen were hired to protect both the livestock and the growing crops (cf. Owen 1958-59 for a discussion of cattle, calf and sheep herdsmen in North Uist).

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625 The township Constable had a great deal of power, which included the right to evict people from their crofts, to enforce rules of good husbandry. The last Constable of Shawbost, who died at the turn of the century, has been credited with a number of ignoble actions, such as forcing an old woman with a sore leg to take her cow to the moor along with all the others. Old widows who had no one going to the fishing and hence no means of paying their rent might be evicted in favor of other persuasive, land-hungry members of the village.

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166 In the last half of the 19th century, many families
were "cleared" from the district of Uig and resettled in
173 Shawbost. According to a local version of village
625 history, the Constable evicted persons from North
166 Shawbost and resettled them in New Shawbost. "The
people from Uig were fishermen, so they needed to be by
the sea. They wouldn't take a croft in New Shawbost at
all." According to another version, the crofts once
extended all the way across from Carnan to the loch;
when the Uig people came, the crofts were chopped in
half, and the street called Baile Stigh was created.

175 Whatever effect the Constables had on land use and
625 animal husbandry, they are now referred to as "tyrants,"
who went mad or committed suicide after the Crofters Act
of 1886.

175 Cattle and horses were tethered or herded within
311 easy walking distance from the township; sheep could
233 be left on the moor without much surveillance. At a
much earlier time another dike existed out beyond the
[178] township dike. The dikes were used according to principles
[221] found in grazing schemes today: the sheep were kept far
out on the moor, beyond the second dike, until midsummer
when they were moved in closer to the village. At this
point they were still out of the arable land of the

175 township, but on land which had been rested and which
311 thus provided better grazing. During the winter the
233 [221] sheep were allowed past the township dike, to graze
along with the other livestock on the stubble of corn
and barley, and mineral-rich seaweed by the shore.

175 After World War II, the individual crofts began
178 to be fenced, and the township dike was no longer
311 repaired. The fact that sheep were still grazed
417 communally on the moor meant that everyone had to go
233 out together on a particular day rather than individually,
but fencing of individual land facilitated variability
in land use. Less use was made of crofts for raising
crops, and they could be used for grazing sheep all
year round.

178 b. Reseeding schemes and apportionments:

311 Another illustration of the individuation of land
[241] use is provided by comparing the number of apportionments
granted by the Crofters Commission for Lewis in the last
10 years with the number of township reseeding schemes
carried out during the same time (see Table IV).[1] A
[425] crofter may apply to the Commission for an area of land
(apportionment) to be sliced out of the township's
common grazing land and given to him for his own use;
theoretically, his share in the township's common grazing
land is reduced if his application is granted.

[1] [See p.x--Analyst]

178 311 232 233 land is reduced if his application is granted. Also, a group of men in a township may apply to the Crofters Commission for permission to fence off a portion of the common grazing land and improve it as grazing for their mutual use. Grants are available for both schemes. The township reseeding schemes, adopted widely after their introduction, have been superseded by the number of individual apportionments.

The first township reseeding schemes in Lewis were tried as an experiment in Ness, Harris, Barvas and Bragar. [654] "The Department of Agriculture fellow watched us every step because it was an experiment. Oh, there were times we cursed him and wanted him away." In Shawbost, a few interested crofters went around the village to see if others were interested. "We got a bad name for it; no one could see anything to it. But those people got the benefit of it." According to one man, initial reluctance to participate in the schemes was overcome when the agricultural advisor pointed out that if they overstated their costs, they would not have to pay much money themselves.

Between 1959 and 1962, seven township reseeding schemes were developed in North and New Shawbost, and four in South Shawbost. They were intended to give

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311 extra grazing for cattle, but by that time the cattle
232 were already on the wane.

233 "The original idea was to provide an early bite for the cattle, because everyone had cattle then. Otherwise they would need to buy more baled hay to see them through the winter."

"Almost everyone in New Shawbost had a share in the
1959 schemes, about 26 altogether. Then it was mostly
cattle. We took turns bringing them in at night, and I
remember taking 33 home, with some left behind for the
night. The cattle were grazed over the summer, and the
[221] lambs were put on from August 10 to October 10. Many
dropped out after the first four or five years, when they
stopped keeping so many cattle. When the number dropped
to 13 or 14, they started using the schemes for mixed
grazing, and then some took up their shares again. When
we only had the cattle and lambs, we didn't need a
souming; but when the mixed grazing started, we had to
keep down the number of sheep. Last year we had difficulty
with disease."

A forty-acre scheme in North Shawbost started with about eighteen crofters and non-crofters participating; there were 37 cattle altogether. Now only four have cattle; the rest have sheep. The sheep-keepers say,

178 "The cattle give too much trouble." A smaller scheme
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232 is grazed only by sheep. On the schemes where mixed
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[578] grazing is practiced, a number of conflicts arise between
those who have only sheep, and those who have cattle as well. To accommodate different demands, one township scheme was divided with a fence; cattle were put in for a month in one part, and then shifted to the second part. The sheep were then brought into the first half. All stock had to be removed from the scheme a month before the lambs were weaned, so that all worm eggs and other harmful elements in the dung of animals previously present would have time to die. What was once used for a single purpose by everyone now has to be divided.

[435] "I paid one pound a head to put cattle on the
[578] reseeding," says a man named Iain. "Now I have to move
them off already. Those sheep people want it for themselves. I won't use it if they're going to be like that. Next year I'll have the use of two crofts and my
[409] apportionment. And now that I have my own tractor I
[242] can put a load of sand at the bottom of the croft to
make the grazing better."

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233 According to another person, who also keeps cattle on the reseeding, "Some people want to move their live-
232 stock on and off the schemes when it suits them, like Iain,
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311 who wanted to keep his bullock on the reseeding for
233 another week because he wasn't ready to sell it; but
232 he should have known the rules. Some people want to
829 keep both cattle and sheep on at the same time, although the agricultural advisor says cattle should go on first, because sheep go for shorter grass. Other people want to put on twice as many sheep as those who have both cattle and sheep. When they stop keeping cattle, they think they're not getting a proper share of the reseedings.

"The Crofters Commission wanted communal township schemes. But people have different demands. It's better to go for an apportionment. You can do what you want with your own land."

178 The number of township members participating in
311 the communal schemes is diminishing to the point where
232 it is less expensive, and much less subject to conflict
423 arising over differences in stock-keeping, to invest in
476 individual holdings of land rather than try to sustain communal practices.

Chapter 3

CHANGING ECONOMIC STRATEGIES:
LAND, SEA AND LOOM

178 In Lewis, the change from a relatively self-
288 sufficient community in which land and sea provided
128 the economic base occurred in the context of the
phenomenal rise of the Harris Tweed industry. In
the following pages, the history of Harris Tweed is
discussed in relation to changing strategies involving
exploitation of land, sea and loom. Associated
features of social life are discussed. Social boundary
systems are defined and discussed in Chapter 4.

A. The Sea

175 Around World War I, nine boats, as long as 27 to
228 [501] 30 feet, driven by sails, used to go out regularly from
[471] the Shawbost harbor. From five to seven men, usually
[454] neighbors, had "shares" in a boat. They would go out
fishing during the night and return the next day. "We
[433] baited our lines with eel, for ling. We would catch
maybe two or three hundred. I remember once we caught
1300."

175 228 On one of the crofts along the strand are the
[348] ruins of two curing houses, where the fish were salted
[439] and dried. Ling, cod, skate and halibut were cured
and sold to local merchants for export. "The same as
[171] they do in Iceland this very day. That was the main
175 industry. Then the English came with their steam
648 trawlers; they ruined the fishing here, and then went
228 west to Iceland and the Faroes. In Iceland they get
fined for poaching, but here the trawlers often ignore
[433] the three-mile limit. But the fishing was the mainstay
here, before the Harris Tweed came along."

175 One man returned from sailing in 1932 and bought a
228 boat for L24. He had 32 lobster pots, and made L7 one
435 501 June by selling the lobsters at a shilling apiece.
[454] Another man, who returned from the United States in 1934
[471] because of the depression, bought a share in a 14-foot
boat. It was made in Ness, at the northern tip of Lewis;
[434] and cost about L14. He and his partners went out every
night possible; the fish provided an important part of
their income. The boat was sold in the 50's. "It wasn't
175 being kept up anyway." Around World War II there were as
228 501 many as twenty boats; men fished at night, after a day's
work. Today there are four 12-foot boats in Shawbost,
178 501 each shared by four or five men. The boats are used
228 intensively for fishing during certain times of the year,

178 but not as often as in the past. In the past boats
501 were in danger of being smashed by the strong seas
228 [493] and winds that gained easy access to the Shawbost
[504] harbor; but today, because so many cars are available,
the boats can be sheltered in the more protected bays
of Carloway, five miles up the coast to the southwest
[434] of Shawbost. Despite this protection and the increase
in income since World War II which would enable more
people to buy boats, the number of boats remains small.

175 In the past certain people were esteemed for
821 "knowing the wind and the sea." The sound of the turf
coming from different directions presaged different
kinds of weather; a line of white across the bay meant
bad weather in a few days. A fifty-year-old man says,
"My father and grandfather could tell when a storm was
coming. They needed to know, and they didn't have
radio and television to tell them. I would know the
signs, too, if I had listened to them."

175 Not only was there local fishing, but the men used
228 to hire themselves as crew on other fishing boats.
464 Several nicknames reflect this history. One family is
551 known by the nickname "Strachan," the surname of a man
who lived on the east coast of Scotland and on whose
boat the head of the Shawbost family had once worked as

175 a crew member. Another family is called "cook," the
228 first job which a novice had to assume when he joined
464 [551] the crew of a fishing boat. One of the last men to go
to the east-coast fishing is about 60 now. The men
[221] came back from the fishing in time to bring in the oats,
[241] [434] barley and potatoes, and the money was used for rent
and the purchase of various foodstuffs and other goods.
[353] They usually brought enough rolls of wallpaper to cover
the stone-walled or wood-lined *tigh dubh* (black house)
[434] for another year. Twenty pounds were good wages for a
season. While the men were away at the fishing, the
[452] remaining members of the family lived on credit from
[571] the local shops, and depended on the good will of
their neighbors.

175 Many men joined the armed services, and were
701 especially sought after by the Navy and the Merchant
706 Service. In 1900, there were 2,500 Lewismen in the
505 Naval Reserve.

175 Around the turn of the century, until the first
228 world war and the growth of the weaving industry, the
484 girls used to "follow the fishing." "Everyone came to
[571] the boat to see you off. You could go all the way to
[435] Aberdeen for 12/6 on a special fish-worker ticket."
The girls went from the south of England to Shetland
in the far north.

000 in the far north. "There were two fishing seasons.
175 For one season you went to Fraserburgh, Stronsay,
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[221] Lerwick and Peterhead; and then the winter fishing was
in England, at Yarmouth, Scarborough and Loucester.
I remember in Yarmouth we didn't like the English
[262] bread, it was such a dull color. We liked the pure
white Scotch bread."

They lived in small huts, and the work was hard but
full of fun. Neighborhood girls used to go together,
bringing bedding and different items in large chests to
share in the housekeeping. Three girls worked together
in a crew, and there were as many as six sharing a room,
in double bunks. Some of the huts were so small that
there was barely enough room for the beds and the cupboards.
At night the boys would come in off the boats.
"You were so tired from being up since early morning;
[577] but you were always able to dance. You were treated with
[178] respect; the youngsters today aren't so good." The
women who married non-islanders that they met at the
fishing were not likely to return.

175 When the weaving started on a large scale, the girls
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464 "were glad enough to have work at home, even though the
work was hard." But many continued their temporary
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464 absences from the island, working in hotels or as
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175 464 domestic servants among the well-to-do families in
166 Glasgow and other cities on the mainland (see Appendix
[357] A).

175 464 When the weaving started, some men settled at home
permanently, but many continued to come and go between
166 462 the sea and the loom. In 1931, the ratio of men to
[288] women in Lewis and Harris was 100:114. The men came
home for temporary jobs, such as the construction of roads
[522] or houses. Jokes are told of the common practice of
(706) sending for an extension of leave. The men found it easy
to join the Naval Reserve because of their fishing
experience; and it brought them a retainer's fee and
expense-paid trips to places off the island for several
weeks of training during the year. But when the wars came,
(701) the loss of men to the Navy and to the Merchant Service
was heavy.

B. The Land

175 427 The number of arrears in rent in the Barvas rent
ledger at the turn of the century indicates the small
amount of money in circulation at the time. Between 1899
and 1914, several crofters paid part of their rent "by
work," and six had some of their stock "uplifted by
decree." For example, a Widow Catherine lost "one red

For example,
a Widow Catherine lost "one red
175 mare and foal (L10), one dun cow (L3/10), and one dun
427 heifer (L1/10)." One family is said to have paid rent
[435] by being fiddlers for "the castle" (the home of Sir
[551] James Matheson), thus earning the patronymic, "Fiddler."
Their income stopped abruptly when the fiddler at the
time, a great-grandfather of descendants now living,
converted to the Free Church and smashed his instrument.

In 1899 and in 1905 it was noted in the rent ledger
that two crofters wanted "first chance of a vacant croft
[628] in the township." In the first quarter of the century,
[764] a conflict ensued between Shawbost and a neighboring
township over the extension of a cemetery; land was too
precious to take out of cultivation and give to the dead
of another village.

173 A 65-year-old man recalls, "Men got their living
241 from the land and sea. They kept more cattle when I was
[233] young. They used the dung of the cattle to fertilize the
[237] soil. The entire croft was used. My father's croft was
only 2½ acres, but he worked it well and harvested eight
stacks of barley to see us through the year." There were
173 a number of kilns to dry grain, and mills along the streams
243 to grind the barley. The "old Norse mill" which was
252 recently rebuilt by the school children as a school project
[251] [877] was in operation from 1920-1934. "Then the tweeds got

173 "Then the tweeds got
243 251 going and the barley took too much trouble; so they had
829 no use for the mill."

173 A 60-year-old woman remembers, "They depended on the
262 potato and fished a lot. I was raised on oatcakes, barley
bannocks, and salt herring. There were no vans and no
school canteens when I was young; you had to carry your
[264] own 'piece' to school. We had porridge with fresh milk
for breakfast, oatcakes and butter for lunch. Dinner was
at 4:00, of potatoes and fish and milk. We had meat maybe
[251] once a week. My father poached a lot. We ate the heads
and the roe of the salmon fresh, and salted the rest."
Once among the cleanest, Hebridean teeth now vie with
164 British cities in extent of decay. It is not uncommon for
759 a child in his first year of school to have six teeth
pulled by the travelling dentist.

261 Various customs associated with food which exist today
272 reflect the days when fare was meager. Tea-drinking is
(171) omnipresent in Britain, but in the islands it has
272 special significance. The taking of tea constitutes
574 the denouement of a visit, and almost always occurs when
[576] someone steps over someone else's threshold. To refuse
tea has some of the connotations of an insult; and to
take only tea, without food, is to have a copan falamh
(empty cup).

264 The only occasions on which it is customary to feed
574 someone an entire meal is at a work party, such as peat-
576 [461] cutting. On such occasions the preparation of meals is
[476] done in an atmosphere of competition and mutual scrutiny,
and the meals are often elaborate. At other times, the
requirements of etiquette can be minimally fulfilled by
giving foods which are still relatively abundant, but
which were much more abundant when the land was cultivated
[262] and cows kept. Such foods are barley bread, oatcakes,
264 clotted sour milk, cream and fresh butter. These foods
571 are usually offered to visitors along with tea, and in the
574 past this custom served to minimize the economic disparities
between villagers, to spread scarce resources. A similar
[737] function was served by the practice of giving part of
[431] each catch of fish to old widows and other villagers in
need of aid. Even though food is more abundant and diverse
today, the taking of tea, and especially food, during a
visit is still very important.

173 A 50-year-old man who "married into" a croft recalls,
[581] "I came from a family of ten children. Everyone had to
[428] leave, or marry a girl with a croft. Only the eldest son
could inherit the croft." There was little room for
423 581 romanticism in the fight for scarce land among the sons
of large crofter and non-crofter families. "The most

581 584 423 "The most important thing about courting was the land. If a girl was going to get a croft, she could have the pick of anyone." Stories are told of broken alliances and the interference of parents, all related to the inheritance of the croft. For example, the father of a 70-year-old woman living today deserted the beautiful girl to whom he was engaged to marry a girl with a croft. "Never mind beauty, just a bit of land." A man would hike fourteen miles across the moor into town to bring back the jug of beer required for the reiteach (the dinner party announcing an intended marriage), only to find that the girl was having a reiteach with someone else.

233 Cattle were much more important than sheep in the early economic history of the Highlands. Scottish history is full of stories of cattle thieves, and of "the drove," in which large herds were driven to Lowland markets. [789] The most common examples of witchcraft concerned spells cast on cows. Many Lewismen still remember market days on Lewis, the day of the drove when cattle were herded into Stornoway from all parts of the island; when children were taken from school to help with the drive, and shopkeepers put up extra stalls for the occasion.

Until as recently as ten years ago, a form of transhumance was practiced on Lewis whereby the cattle

233 were taken out to small huts in the central moorlands
233 for several months during the summer. These moorland
342 dwellings, called sheilings or airidh, were tiny stone
structures, as small as seven by five feet. They had
double stone walls filled with clay, and a rounded
thatched roof. There were two doors opposite each other
in the longer walls, one of which was filled with turf
depending on the direction of the wind. A fireplace
[354] was built into one end of the hut; shelves in the stone
[352] walls held basins of milk and other items; and the major
part of the sheiling constituted a grass-and-heather-lined
cavity which served as a bed. The sheilings were usually
[361] clustered together near a stream, duplicating neighborhoods within the village.

221 Ploughing and planting were finished in the spring
before the young men and women went off to the fishing,
and before the cattle were taken to the sheiling. Some
families went to the sheiling as early as March for a
"fresh bite" of grass. Many went out in the middle of
May, and returned at the end of July or beginning of
August.

233 "During the week, young girls or boys stayed out on
857 the sheilings, depending on who was available in the
887 family; maybe old people who couldn't do anything else,
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233 usually an old woman, as the women were responsible for
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887 the milking, and the old men were usually fishing around
462 the village.

233 "We left for the sheiling early in the morning,
512 taking bed clothes and food. I walked out with my aunt, who went back home in the morning. My mother came out with the provisions in the evening. If no one came out
[513] that day, I went to sleep with someone else. You never slept alone. During the day we fished for trout or gathered small blackberries; or we looked for the nests of grouse and other birds. You would knit or read, and walk for miles to visit friends. The boys swam in the loch, and sometimes the girls pinched their clothes. From the top of the hills you could see Stornoway, the hills of Lochs, Uig and the lighthouse in Ness; on some days you could see the distant hills of Caithness on the mainland. It's on the sheiling that I learned about other parts of the island.

"I remember watching the sun and trying to will it
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233 to stay high in the sky, before our mothers came out from
234 the village to milk in the evening. They called the cattle--'Troit, troit, troit'--and they carried the milk every day from the sheiling to the village, all those miles. The cattle knew their own sheilings; sometimes

512 The cattle
233 knew their own sheilings; sometimes
825 they came back before milking time and stuck their heads
[234] inside. They stood outside the sheiling at night, and
that's how you can tell where a sheiling once was, even
though the walls have fallen, by the rich green grass.
Calves were born during the summer. A hollow was scooped
233 out in the peat, and lined with turf and moss. People
[422] had as many as four or five cows. It was like Switzerland,
only we didn't have the bells on the cows. There was lots
[272] [262] of milk, fresh thick cream and crowdie (clotted sour
[234] milk); the old people knew how to make cheese.

233 "The moor was very eerie at night, with the sound of
821 751 the birds. There were only a few hours of darkness
[513] anyway, and I'm sure we didn't get much sleep, but somehow
we were always fresh. It was the air, the moor air is
more health-giving. The air is different there. Ill
people benefited from the change. Sometimes a person
with TB would stay out there all summer. The air is heavy
by the sea.

805 "There was no sense of time the way there is today.
233 If you got lost in the snow or fog, you followed the cows
221 home. You had all summer to take home the peats, to work
829 the croft, to harvest the corn. There wasn't a world,
[178] there was only ourselves. That has changed since the war.

233 "You got away from village life when you went to
829 the sheiling. The youngsters ran wild. Everyone talked
more freely somehow. It didn't feel like a Sunday out
233 there—the minister couldn't see that far. Only the
883 young men and women in their late teens or 20's were out
at the weekends. They would send the younger ones home.
They came out in their good clothes, from Saturday night
to Monday morning. Groups of young people walked out and
back together, the girls in one group and the boys in
[533] another, joking and teasing. They sang the old songs and
learned new ones from each other. Some were good at
making up songs. You wouldn't believe how many people
could sleep together in a single sheiling. It was a
[829] heaven on earth. Everybody was one family. The hills
were filled with the sound of voices."

233 Not every family in the village went to the sheilings.
Some families had enough land within the township to graze
their cattle. But they usually went out at the weekends,
for the fun and company.

237 One of the most important products of the cow was
241 not milk but dung, which was used to keep the poor land
231 productive. Because people did not have the enriched
234 animal feeds available today, a cow might not have a calf,
and thus did not give milk, for four or five years.

231 People kept several cattle, some of which were dry most
[234] of the time. But because everyone was keeping cattle,
[244] milk could be gotten from a neighbor. One man was
[246] planting eight or nine hundredweights of potatoes before
the war, some of which would be used to feed the livestock.
511 "You couldn't buy milk then, so you *had* to keep a cow.
[234] And even though people were weaving, they weren't getting
[231] so much money as they are now. It was the barter system
[288] here for a long time. So they didn't have the money to
[437] buy feeding stuff. It was better to spend the time
planting potatoes. Now of course there's more money in
the weaving."

175 After the war, an act was passed which provided free
272 milk for schoolchildren. Milk for the Shawbost school
234 was supplied by a farm near Stornoway, and villagers first
178 started buying the milk from the school milk van. A strike
175 held by weavers during the war had increased the payments
178 for weaving, and the barter system had stopped. More
288 [468] money was available. As the loom was more profitable,
[437] more people stopped keeping cows, and relied on their
[231] neighbors for milk, or got their milk from the van bringing
[272] milk to the school. And as the cattle got fewer, the
178 market for bottled milk expanded. A dairy was started on
231 the west side of the island in the mid-1960's which carries
434 234 milk from Uig to Ness.

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231 The number of cattle diminished as milk became
234 available by other means; and when the township reseeding
233 schemes came into existence, the need to go to the
178 sheilings for an "early bite" was removed. The sheilings
342 that remain in use today are huts of tin, wood and
concrete within easy walking distance from the highway,
used on weekends and during summer holidays. Most of
these modern sheilings are close to Stornoway, and serve
as summer retreats for the relatively harried urban
[184] dwellers such as publicans. On the west side, the
sheilings are no longer used, but remain as a theme of
songs and in nostalgic memories.

C. The Loom

175 Clo Mor, the big cloth, was woven in the Highlands
286 and Islands for hundreds of years. Martin Martin,
who travelled through the Outer Hebrides in the late 17th
century, describes the export of "plaiding," and the
practice of waulking or shrinking the woven length of
cloth (Martin 1716). Weaving was done on wooden looms,
and produced only for local markets until the middle of
the 19th century.

[731] By the middle of the 19th century, the failure of
[735] the kelp industry, decline of fishing, and destruction

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731 of potato crops by blight had contributed to widespread
735 poverty. The production of cloth for non-local markets
286 was promoted initially by philanthropic proprietors in
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741 an effort to ameliorate such conditions. Lady Dunmore,
439 of the Dunmore family that owned Harris during most of
the 19th century, was largely responsible for developing
a market in London and elsewhere for cloth woven in Harris.
[565] The cloth was popular first among the aristocracy, who
wore it for hunting and other sporting occasions. The
[438] romantic image of a cottage industry promoted for charitable
[435] purposes contributed to the market value of the tweed.

The market expanded in the second half of the 19th
century, aided by ladies of leisure who followed the example
286 set by Lady Dunmore (cf. Hunter 1964: 24-26). The
441 production of cloth for a commercial market spread from
175 Harris to the southern isles, but was slow in coming to
[964] Lewis, where the proprietor, Sir James Matheson, provided
the people with construction jobs. After Matheson died in
1878, weaving for outside markets began in Lewis in the
parish bordering Harris, and the name "Harris Tweed" was
used because a market for cloth of this name had already
been established. By World War I, weaving for outside
markets was being done in all four parishes in Lewis. In
1899 there were 55 looms in Lewis and over 200 in Harris.

286 441 175 By 1911, the number of looms in Lewis had increased to 250-300 (Hunter 1964: 42).

[288] [184] By the late 19th century small mills had replaced domestic spinning and weaving in the Highlands on the mainland. Weaving continued to be a home industry in the Hebrides where it was encouraged by the support of non-profit-making organizations such as the Highland Home Industries and Arts Association, the Scottish Home Industries Association, and the Crofters Agency--all established at the end of the 19th century--and also encouraged by local merchants who had begun to act as middlemen in marketing the cloth. These merchants owned small general stores throughout the island and either bought the tweed from local weavers or gave them goods from their stores in exchange. Many of the tweed firms in Lewis grew from such small general stores and from the barter system.

288 175 159 472 1. The Harris Tweed Industry in Shawbost: Coinneach Rod, a man who started a tweed business on the west side of Lewis which eventually developed into a large mill with equipment for spinning yarn and finishing tweeds, was said to have been a risk-taker, a man who lost the first L50 he borrowed, but borrowed another L50 and never looked back, a man who throughout his life gave fellow

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businessmen nervous breakdowns because of the risks he continued to take. "He was planning to start some business. At one point it was going to be either distilling or the tweed, and he just happened to go for the tweed."

Some say Coinneach Rod had physical disabilities, developed or aggravated by military service, which made him unable to work like other men, and hence he was forced to find other ways of earning a living. He was a merchant, like other islands who became entrepreneurs in the tweed business.

According to one version of Coinneach Rod's life, he began to handle tweed on a large scale as the result of an accident, when an agent selling tweed for a merchant on the east side of the island arrived on Lewis for the first time, asked for a "Kenneth Macleod, merchant," and was directed to Coinneach Rod of Shawbost.

"He was also an earthy, natural, easy man to get on with. He never changed, even after the money came. He would sit the buyers down with a plateful of cuddies and say 'Dig in,' 'Eat up.' He always ate them whole, and never spat out the bones. The buyers liked that. They liked his easy manner."

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Between the first and second world wars, the merchant was an extremely powerful figure. When men and women

175 went away to the fishing, their families bought groceries
441 on credit. "If the merchant thought the fishing season
452 would be good, he let them have as much as they wanted;
otherwise he restricted them in their buying."

288 The barter system continued in Shawbost long after
175 it stopped in Stornoway. A weaver was given credit in
159 Coinneach Rod's store, until it closed in 1948, for the
444 exact amount of the tweed. He never gave money. "You had
437 to get just the right amount of goods, even down to
472 tuppence in matches." People were forced to buy huge
jars of jam which they did not really want or need. Some
"cunning" fellows would slip a two-pound pair of shoes
into a shoebox marked 15 shillings. "Coinneach Rod would
ask if you wanted a wireless, or would a tweed jacket fit
your son. You couldn't refuse, or you wouldn't do any
weaving for him for a long time."

288 Coinneach Rod bought looms for many weavers, and they
175 would weave only for him to pay off the debt. "People
159 living on the dole with a large family would go to him
472 and ask him to buy them a loom. He would get the man a
452 loom, and then get him a lot of tweeds to weave so the man
could pay him off. It was two tweeds for yourself and one
for the loom."

288 2. Centralization and Specialization: Centralization
175 and specialization in handling the production of the tweed
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288 developed from the concentration of power in the hands
175 of the merchants. In the early days of the industry,
441 all the processes involved in the production of a
286 236 finished length of tweed were carried out by individual
438 families. A man used wool from his own flock, and with the
175 [386] aid of other family members, dyed it with vegetable dyes,
carded and spun it by hand, wove it, washed and shrunk
286 it, and found his own buyer. Dyeing wool, spinning yarn,
236 and washing ("waulking") the finished length of tweed
175 462 was usually done by women. In Harris, the entire process
of producing a tweed was carried out by women, but in
Lewis the weaving was done largely by men.

175 A woman in her 80's recalls the process of weaving
286 when she was young. Hand-spinning had died out by this
time, although the question of whether tweeds woven with
such yarn could legitimately be called Harris Tweed was
not resolved until 1934.

"About 1916 or so it took about two weeks to a month
175 283 to do a tweed. You bought the wool from the Agricultural
[435] Board. Sixteen bags of wool, costing about L20, would
[433] do four tweeds. You needed four one-stone bags per
[386] tweed. Then you would spend a day gathering a bag of
[824] crotal (lichen scraped from rocks and used for dye). One
bag per one bag of wool was required for the dye. After

175 dyeing the wool it was spread out, dried and sent to
283 Stornoway to be made into yarn. The yarn was then sent
175 back, and the weaver wove and washed it. About six women
286 [462] were required to do the waulking (the process by which
the cloth was washed and shrunk).

175 "In those days the weavers designed their own
286 patterns, and sold their own finished tweeds. I remember
432 going into town with my brother, we had two tweeds in the
cart. We went into a shop to sell the tweed, and the man
said it was poor weaving. He didn't want to pay the full
price for it. I told my brother to roll it back up, we
would take it somewhere else. As we left the shop, he
told me I had 'good cheek.' In the next shop the merchant
didn't say anything, and gave my brother the regular
price. We went home with L60."

286 The great demand for tweed encouraged the development
288 of more efficient methods of production. One by one the
175 various processes of production were taken over by
178 [433] specialists, and gradually these specialists were brought
[434] together under one roof. Large boilers for dyeing wool
[463] were supplied as a result of actions taken by the Congested
[386] Districts Board, which was formed in 1897. The Scottish
Home Industries provided chemical dyes. The most
[236] difficult and time-consuming processes were carding and
[283] spinning, which small mills on the mainland began to do

286 288 on commission for weavers around the turn of the century.
175 By the early 1920's, four mills on the island were
178 [236] carding and spinning wool on commission; and one mill
[283] brought looms into its premises. Lord Leverhulme, who
bought Lewis in 1918, saw the value of concentrating
weavers in one place and of improving the technology.
He encouraged the introduction of Hattersley domestic
[463] looms, which eventually replaced the wooden looms. The
individual weaver also did his own warping, but after
World War II the mills began to hire warpers to work full
time on mill premises. Transporting the tweeds, which
used to be the responsibility of the weavers, is now the
responsibility of the mills. Today all processes except
the actual weaving are handled by mills, most of which
are located in Stornoway.

Such steps in specialization and centralization made
175 sense to the weaver. One of the older weavers recalls,
286 "In the late 20's or 30's you could buy a yard of Harris
288 Tweed for about two shillings. It wasn't economical for
435 any crofter to dye and spin the yarn, weave it and sell it
for only two shillings a yard. As the mills enlarged,
they could make it with the machinery because they could
make it an economic proposition."

175 However, the tendency toward specialization and
286 centralization was in direct conflict with the reasons
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175 behind the tweed's popularity. The tweed was more than
286 288 a cloth; it was peat smoke and windswept moorland, the
[828] image of the free man who had escaped city life and
machines and was the master of his own destiny. Steps
had been taken all along the way to preserve the image
of home-crafted goods, as when, in an effort to prevent
machine-spinning, carding mills were built in Lewis and
Harris at the turn of the century to prevent wool from
being sent to mills on the mainland, where it was both
[685] carded and spun. As early as 1906, a man was convicted
in London of selling power-loomed tweed under the name
288 "Harris Tweed." Today power-driven looms can produce
402 double-width cloth 54 inches wide, a width much preferred
to the 28-inch cloth produced on the Hattersley loom
because there is less waste when the cloth is cut. But
because "Harris Tweed" must be hand-woven, new looms of
light-weight metal are being designed on which double-
[435] width cloth can be hand-woven. The new looms will cost
so much that many weavers say they would be unlikely to
invest in them, especially given the uncertain future of
the industry.

175 The Harris Tweed Association, formed in 1909, was
178 granted a certification mark by the Board of Trade which
288 441 was stamped on tweeds that were hand-spun and hand-woven
[424] in the islands. During World War I, hand-spinning died
[286]

175 178 out in Lewis, and the Harris Tweed Association was
288 ineffective in enforcing its standards. In 1934,
286 weavers were allowed to use yarn spun in island mills,
441 and production increased; but no weaving was allowed
to be done in the mills. All looms were removed from
those mills which had tried to centralize this stage
of production. The actual process of weaving remained,
by legal definition, decentralized, although the word
"crofter" was changed to "islander," thus widening the
category of persons who could weave "Harris Tweed," and
paving the way for centralization of weavers in the town
of Stornoway.

286 Any person can purchase his own yarn, weave his own
288 tweeds, and sell them to tailors or summer tourists;
467 but before a weaver can weave for the mills, he must be
registered with the Weavers Union. The Weavers Union is
a branch of the Transport and General Workers Union,
which includes mill employees, hospital workers, lorry
288 drivers, and others. It is an anomaly of the Harris
467 Tweed industry that workers classed as self-employed
should join a union of employees and is another indication
of the centralization of control and power in the mills,
with whom the weavers, along with the mill workers, bargain
288 for higher wages. Weavers receive a basic sum of over
435 466 804 L10 for each length of tweed, which is usually 38 weaver's

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435 yards (a weaver's yard is equal to 8 feet, a measure
288 which derives from the size of the frame once used
[804] to wind hanks of yarn). Payment varies according to
the number of colors used in the pattern. A weaver
288 may average 2½ tweeds per week when the work is available,
465 thus earning more than mill workers. A female mill
[562] worker earns about L11 or L12, and her male counterpart
about L3 more.

288 Because weavers are classed as self-employed, they
745 do not qualify for unemployment benefit. They may apply
657 for social security, but must submit to a "means" test,
and the possession of bank savings or other assets disqualifies them from receiving such aid. All British workers must pay a weekly sum for "insurance stamps," a certain number of which makes the workers eligible for small payments from the government during periods of illness. Self-employed persons must pay for their own insurance stamps, whereas employers pay for the stamps of their workers. A weaver who does not keep up with his payments of over one pound a week for insurance stamps must pay the accumulated debt at a later time.

471 Weavers face other costs. They buy looms and bobbin-
288 winding machines, and pay for lighting, heating, and the
288 maintenance of all equipment. The preservation of this
463 anomalous status of "self-employed" is related to the
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288 463 [438] attempt to preserve the image of Harris Tweed as a cottage industry, and thus maintain its market value. Many weavers, politicians and businessmen argue that the weaver should be reclassified.

However, the status of weavers as self-employed is not simply bureaucratic jargon designed to preserve 288 the Harris Tweed industry. In most employer-employee 466 situations, people are hired with the understanding that they have certain qualifications and will perform certain jobs. Weavers are not under such expectations and obligations. A mill has little idea of the skill or motivation of the weavers to whom they send their yarn. Weavers differ in matters such as degree of skill and state of health, and they also differ in the amount of time available to weave, and other matters that affect their production. Some weavers refuse to do complex patterns; some are busy with croft work and do not want to do "urgent" tweeds; others who are recovering from illness may prefer not to weave the heavier tweeds. The [467] tweed van sent out by the mills to make deliveries all over the island meets one such variable situation after another, and thus finds it difficult to meet the demand of the Weavers Union, that tweeds should be equally distributed among all weavers on the island. Theoretically, the mills are supposed to deliver tweeds in strict

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466 rotation to the weavers who are registered with
them.

Other factors also hinder equal distribution of
[602] tweeds. Personal considerations enter; for example,
the managers of the Shawbost mills feel a responsibility
for the weavers in their own village, who are usually
kinsmen. Exclusive distribution to local weavers is
rationalized by saying that the tweeds must be done
urgently; hence they are distributed only to the weavers
who are known to do tweeds quickly.

288 The major factor hindering equal distribution of
494 tweeds is the expense which derives from the decentrali-
466 sation of weavers, that is, the cost of petrol and upkeep
[175] of the vans, which is born by the mills. Before World
[178] War II, the weavers rather than the mills were responsible
[493] for transporting the tweeds, by cart and horse at first,
and then by motorized transport.

288 During this period, independent entrepreneurs
175 carried tweeds in vans and buses at four shillings each,
492 a practice which stimulated the development of public
494 transportation. Although the number of passengers using
such vans and buses for public transport fluctuated,
the income derived from the cartage of tweeds was in
itself large enough to be profitable and to maintain the
[178] enterprises. An efficient service existed, despite the

288 paucity of passengers, which provided rides to and
175 from town many times a day; but with the "development,"
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472 that is, the centralization, of industry, public transportation
494 deteriorated. Visitors to the island unfamiliar
with this history are struck by practices which they
interpret as coming out of a clockless past, such as
the present custom of stopping the bus midway in its
journey to Stornoway so that the driver can eat dinner
in his mother's house while all passengers wait on board.
Such a custom is fairly recent, and indicates the
deterioration of public services to populations which
are marginal to the centralized source of these services.

288 During World War II, when the demand for tweed was
175 high and the number of weavers small, the weavers staged
[468] an effective strike by which they received an increase
in pay and the burden of cartage was shifted from them
[178] to the mills. This did not affect the system of transportation
[494] until the mills realized it would be cheaper
to run their own transport rather than to pay the independent
[493] drivers a "cartage fee." The mills then began to use
their own vans to deliver yarn and collect tweeds directly
175 to and from the weavers. Once the mills took over transportation,
288 they tended to deliver tweeds to weavers
178 closest to the mills rather than to uphold the principle
[494]
[466] of equal distribution. This practice (made possible by
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175 the 1934 decision to change the word "crofter" to
178 "islander") led to the weavers living in council
288 [361] houses in town and working in loomsheds behind the
houses. Unequal distribution has also contributed
to Shawbost's relative prosperity, and to the decline
of weaving in more remote parts of the island. The
[464] unequal distribution of tweeds has made it difficult
to maintain a large labor force, which in turn limits
the growth and development of the industry.

288 3. Instability of the Industry: The Harris Tweed
433 industry has undergone a number of crises. Periods of
178 depression have alternated with periods of prosperity.
[458] (See Appendix B for the fluctuation in the number of
yards stamped each year with the Harris Tweed trade-
mark.) The very conditions which give the tweed its
[435] market value—the decentralized, non-mechanized human
[466] element—also limit the possibilities of growth in the
industry, and contribute to the industry's instability.

288 When a business remains small, it must collect
441 orders before it can provide work to have the orders
filled (except when demand for an item is strong, as
occurred around the time of the previous world war;
during the war and for a few years after, tweeds could
be made first and then marketed, because any cloth
[471] could be sold). Only a large business can keep weavers

288 441 at work producing tweeds which it then tries to market.
471 The latter method requires the investment of a great deal
of capital to make the tweeds and pay the weavers before
a buyer is found. The small mills require an immediate
return for their capital investment, which is ensured
[434] by not investing unless there is a definite order. The
fortunes of the weavers oscillate with the luck and skill
of the mills in soliciting orders; thus, the mills do
not provide a constant, stable source of income. The
288 434 nature of the tweed, as a high-priced luxury item rather
than a basic necessity, contributes to the instability of
the demand. When fashions change or when world-wide
economic depressions come, the high-priced tweed with
its specialized image as a cloth for aristocratic,
[185] sporty dress is forgotten for awhile. Efforts are being
made to change this image; but the product's status as
a high-priced luxury item persists.

288 An extremely small business can survive periods of
441 depression when capital outlay in the form of machinery,
458 running costs, and so on is not large. An extremely
large business that has cornered a large share of the
market can often survive an erratic schedule of orders
because it has a larger accumulation of capital, but a
medium-sized business has too much overhead to survive
long periods of depression. Examples of all three exist

288 in Shawbost: a very small business, which until
441 recently did not even have its own transport but
458 hired facilities when they were needed and simply
went into hibernation when orders stopped coming;
a medium-sized business, which went into liquidation
in 1971; and a large business, which continues to
survive despite a depression which has continued
since the late 1960's.

288 Harris Tweed is sent to markets all over the
441 world; but because of the difficulty of maintaining
464 a large labor force, the filling of orders is sometimes
[439] slow. If large orders cannot be met, weaving as an
island-wide occupation cannot be maintained. The
number of weavers on the island fluctuates, as slack
periods come and men adopt the time-tested strategy
of temporary migration in search of other jobs. One
[468] of the factors which aided the weavers during their
[175] strike of 1943 was the fact that so many other jobs
were available during the war that the future of the
industry was jeopardized.

288 In the last five years the number of mill employees
464 has decreased from 800 to 500. The decrease is due in
[178] part to the introduction of more efficient techniques
and new equipment, but there is little room for improvement in the production of tweeds because the human
element, the weaver, is essential to its production.

000 element, the weaver, is essential to its production.
288 In 1960 weavers receiving tweed yarns from the mills
464 totalled about 1,500 persons, a number which held for
463 about three years and then started dropping at a rate
of about 100 a year. In 1971 the number of weavers
was less than 1,000, and trends of change appeared to
presage a continued dwindling of numbers. It is
166 464 estimated that emigration increased during 1970-71.
Men have returned to the sea, have gone to Glasgow as
laborers, or have taken advantage of training courses
offered by the Labor Exchange, courses that will
eventually remove them from the island setting.

288 The instability of the industry and the fluctuation
571 in amount of weaving work available at any given time
458 has created an environment in which personal ties and
individual maneuvering rather than a widespread adherence
to impersonal rules such as equal distribution are
[602] emphasized. Strategies which involve the mobilization
of kinship and neighborhood ties and involve an emphasis
on personal relationships rather than the depersonalization
usually associated with industry are made possible
by economic factors such as the dependence of decentralized
weavers on centralized mills. The watchfulness and
consciousness of one's neighbors so characteristic of
village life prevail. Questions about the state of

Questions about the state of
288 "the tweed" permeate all discussions, and often
571 constitute an initial greeting. "Have you got a
458 tweed in the loom? How many do you have? Did you
[521] see Stickey's tweed van going into Pairc? Did you
[576] hear that Newalls has an order for about 800 pieces...?"

"The mills brought me two tweeds, and I got two in town myself. I stuck those two in the attic so that anyone who came in would be none the wiser," says one person in a whisper. Neighbors are in and out of each others' houses and loomsheds, observant and questioning, on the lookout for any indication that they have missed out on some transaction in the competition for scarce goods.

D. Weaving as Strategy

286 When weaving was done on a wooden hand loom, the
178 weaver required a longer period of apprenticeship.
402 Weaving was "more of an art," as some of the older weavers remember it today. Not only was the shuttle thrown back and forth by hand, but the lifting of different threads in the warp was done by manipulating four foot pedals in the correct order. Today, the
288 process of weaving is very much simplified: the weaver
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402 pushes only two foot pedals, and simply keeps an eye on

288 178 the automatic shuttle; all other processes have been
402 built into the design of the Hattersley loom (cf.
Thomson 1969). In other words, weaving does not entail
288 463 very specialized skills and is not difficult to learn.
A sailor can come home and learn to weave in a short
period of time, or pick up the trade again with ease
after having been absent from the loom for a long time.
[571] Neighbors substitute for each other when someone is ill
[593] if a tweed is "urgent." Wives help their husbands, and
young boys their fathers and uncles. Such low-level
specialization and substitutability are complementary
to crofting activities and the maintenance of neighborhood
ties, and may be seen to favor continuance of the
occupation of weaving.

874 The Lews Castle College in Stornoway, established
286 as a technical college in 1953 in a building that was
[467] formerly the home of Sir James Matheson, offers training
courses in weaving for adults which last for ten weeks
and qualify a person for membership in the Weavers
Union (cf. Stornoway Gazette, March 16, 1968). The
[872] college also sends weaving instructors to all the public
schools on the island to instruct young boys in the
654 rudiments of weaving. The Highlands and Islands
286 Development Board have in the past offered loans and
288 grants with which to purchase looms, and government aid
has protected the mills.

286 Despite these aids and incentives, parents do not
288 463 encourage their children to weave. The weavers themselves
868 describe the job as dull, offering no security
593 829 and no possibilities for advancement.

[461] Referring to her young son, a mother says, "By the time he's old enough to weave, the tweeds will have failed." Another mother says, "I want him to learn some trade, if he's intelligent enough. I don't want him to stay here. The tweed is so uncertain." "There's no future in it," says the father of another young boy, "I definitely wouldn't want him to be a weaver. It would be good if he went in for engineering."

463 The histories of the weavers reveal many examples
464 of shifting occupations. Weaving often alternates with
286 work in the local mill, which is also relatively unspecialized. The Shawbost mill must tolerate this unstable labor force, as labor is difficult to find.
[166] Eldest sons tend to leave the island for more stable,
[593] permanent jobs, leaving the croft and the loom to their younger siblings. Table V[1] shows the number of male weavers in each age group.

288 The fact that Shawbost has the same age structure
464 as the rest of rural Lewis (see Table II)[2] and less
162 unemployment signifies that weaving has not served as
166 an adequate incentive to keep young people on the island.

[1] [See p. xi--Analyst]

[2] [See p.xiii--Analyst]

288 464 Rather, the industry has provided jobs for those who,
162 for one reason or another, would have stayed anyway.

166 Of the weavers between the ages of 15 and 24, eight are only sons or sons who had to begin work because their fathers became ill or died; two others live at home only temporarily and plan to work elsewhere. Of those of ages 25 to 34, two men live at home because they are disabled; one has returned from the Merchant Service for awhile; two are only sons who are encouraged to remain at home, and several are youngest sons or sons whose parents have strongly discouraged them from leaving home. Of the 35-44 age group, four have remained on the island because of various ailments such as tuberculosis and mental health problems; one had to leave the Merchant Service because of an injury; at least five have stayed or returned because of family ties, the demands of aging parents and sick siblings. In the 45-54 age category, a number of men served in the navy or other branches of the armed forces during World War II, and returned from shipwrecks and other disastrous events to the relative security of the loom.

288 Many of the older weavers (at least nine in the
464 55-64 age category) started weaving after they had
167 returned from the United States or Canada because of
162 the depression. Some recall the horror of wandering

288 464 167 162 through alleys to rummage through the trash cans of hospitals or other large institutions for food. The occupational histories of the weavers support the generalization made by an official of the Harris Tweed Association that the younger weavers leave because they do not like the weaving and they are replaced mainly by older men who want to settle down after a life at sea. (See Appendix A for several life histories of weavers.)

E. Crofting as Strategy

241 288 434 Because of the relatively high income provided by the Harris Tweed industry, those who remain within the township have tended to emphasize weaving and neglect the croft.

592 1. Croft as Place of Residence vs. Agricultural Unit: Most of the 169 households consist of married couples with [582] their unmarried children. A tendency to marry rather late in life and for children not to marry while their parents are still living is evident in Table VI[1] (Partial List of Households According to Type of Household and Age of Household Head).

Fourteen households of married couples and their children (not included in Table VI) include at least one

[1] [This source as received did not contain this table--Analyst]

592 unmarried sibling. Eleven households consist only of
siblings who have never married, men and women who in
1971 were 45 years old or older. Two widows live with
[589] their unmarried siblings. Sixteen widows or widowers
live alone, and sixteen unmarried persons live alone.

241 The large number of households occupied by single,
592 elderly people reflects the use of the croft as a place
423 of residence rather than as an agricultural unit, a
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888 view of the croft that was given legal expression in
[428] 1968 by the Miscellaneous Provisions Act. Before 1968,
the croft went automatically to the eldest son if a
crofter died intestate. Since 1968, the rights of different claimants must be considered and tenancy by a new person must be confirmed. District and county councillors argued for this change, saying that a widow was often left on the croft and her security endangered because the eldest son was usually far away from the island, in Canada or some other country. In other words, rather than an agricultural unit which should naturally be taken over and worked by the male head of the household, the croft is seen as a place of residence for the infirm and for the aged, and especially for the aged female.

657 The Crofters Commission has suggested that elderly
185 people be allowed to rent small plots of land on which
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657 their houses are located, and that most of the land be
185 freed for use by more active crofters, but the ideology
423 associated with possession of the croft makes such a
888 plan extremely difficult to implement. "The croft is
311 your base, the only thing you have. You don't want it taken away, even if someone else is using it already anyway. Our county councillor suggested amalgamating the unused crofts at a recent meeting. No one said anything, but no one wants it."

592 Of the five households that have the use of three
241 crofts each, one consists of a bachelor who uses the
311 crofts for grazing a large number of sheep. A second household is composed of two brothers who had stayed at home to take care of their aged parents. One of these brothers recently married, after the last parent died. These men keep cattle and sheep, and both weave.

592 A third household is headed by a married man who
241 has recently sold most of his livestock in order to
311 "concentrate on the weaving." His father, who used to
288 haul peat with a horse and cart in exchange for the use of grazing land so that his family never had to go to the sheilings, died a few years ago. "My father was a crofter only. The weaving didn't start until the 30's. He was wounded in the war. He got a pension and sold a cow or a few sheep each year. But I didn't

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288 like to leave the loom for the time it took to look after the sheep."

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[463] A fourth household consists of three unmarried siblings in their 40's and 50's who recently sold their cattle and now keep only sheep for their own consumption. They cultivate a small amount of oats and hay to feed the sheep during the winter. The brother who was largely responsible for taking care of the livestock is now "concentrating on the loom," and his brother works in the mill. Their sister, who used to work in hotels on the mainland, now keeps house for them. [409] [404] Described as a "self-contained family," they have a tractor and a deep-freeze and take care of their peat and the harvesting of crops by themselves. 654 423 One of their crofts has become too waterlogged even for grazing and was sold recently to the son of a local crofter, not for agriculture but as a prerequisite for applying to the Department of Agriculture for a housing grant. Only tenants of crofts can apply for such grants. As this particular croft is too wet to be cultivated or used as a house site, the only motive which the new tenant has to become a crofter is to gain access to governmental subsidy.

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311 The fifth household is composed of a retired couple and their son and his wife and family. They have no cattle, and use the crofts for grazing sheep.

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233 The competition between the loom and the croft is evident in the few communal township practices which still exist. One of the rules of township organization is that all households must bring their sheep in from the moor on the same day. Other rules are that no one [231] should go out on the moor at any other time with a dog, and everyone who has sheep should go out on the day designated by the township grazings committee to collect them. The moor is extensive, and the sheep wander over a wide area. Only if a large number of men go out together and come in with their dogs like a wide net can the sheep be brought in with a minimum of effort over the stream-cut, uneven ground. Anyone who goes out alone disturbs the grazing animals and probably drives them farther away from the village.

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183 These rules have strong ethical import and are much more than a set of procedural rules prescribed by the Crofters Commission. "There is a code of ethics which you learn as you grow up, as you go with your [578] elders out to the moor. You can fight with a man over a woman and make it up next week; but if you fight with a man over a sheep, you won't make it up for thirty [178] years." That these rules are weakening in importance is indicated by situations in which only two or three men have gone out in the early morning to bring in the

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sheep. These men arrive back in the village hours later to find the road lined with the cars of men who have come to look for their own sheep among the flock but who had not bothered to spend the time collecting them. Many have gotten rid of their sheep to "concentrate on the weaving."

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2. Sheep vs. Cattle: As mentioned in the section entitled "Changing Land Use" (cf. Chapter 2), a split has emerged between those who keep cattle, and those who keep only sheep. Cattle were once predominant, but the number of sheep has greatly increased. The conflict between raisers of sheep and of cattle extends beyond the use of the reseeding schemes (see Chapter 2).

Cattle are usually brought in from the reseedings or from the common grazing lands where they are tethered, and put on the unfenced, arable inner grazing land of the township at the same time that the sheep are brought in from the moor. In one township on the west side of Lewis, the cattle were released a few days before the fank,[1] which resulted in the formation of two groups, sheep-only people and sheep-and-cattle people, which opposed each other. At the fank held a few days later,

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[1] The word "fank" refers to the process of bringing the sheep in from the moor, and to the wooden pen in which the sheep are gathered and claimed by their owners.

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178 sheep were let out of the pens, and a fight broke out
578 between the two groups of people.

241 3. Crofters vs. Non-crofters: Another division
657 within the township has developed largely because of
578 the attention paid by outside agencies to "crofting."
175 The Crofters Act of 1886 defined crofters and gave them
[671] a protected, privileged status. In fact, very little
distinction existed between non-crofters (sometimes called
squatters and/or cottars) and crofters, and in some places,
such as the Isle of Scalpay, non-crofters even out-numbered
crofters. Both categories were linked to each other by
bonds of kinship and mutual dependence. Non-crofters
were in fact favored economically. They did not have to
pay rent, but had the same opportunities to graze stock
241 and plough land as did crofters. Many crofters themselves
175 had buaile, units of land not recognized as part of the
423 croft and not included in the land for which rent was
paid but recognized as property by the villagers themselves
to the extent that these bits of moorland passed down
through families or could be given by one person to another.
Even today, a young girl thinking of getting married says
her future husband might build their house on her father's
buaile, and a man may build a house on moorland "given"
to him by his wife's aunt. Officially, a non-crofter had
no "rights" to a house which he built on the common

241 grasing land and he could not transfer such property in
175 423 a will. Similarly a crofter had no right to his *buaile*,
and could not formally protest if another crofter sought
to apportion this land for his own use (see Chapter 2
[627] for a discussion of apportionments). But in both
situations, informal understandings superseded legal
rights.

241 Various legislative acts which followed the 1886
657 act focussed attention on the crofter. Various matters
175 associated with crofting are handled by a Crofters
[654] Commission. Crofters have access to grants and loans
[494] to improve land and build fences and homes. They may
buy goods at low prices in a nearby cooperative store.
As crofts were fenced, land around the townships became
scarce and non-crofters found it difficult to keep
large numbers of cattle and sheep.

241 Within recent years it has become possible for non-
178 crofters to gain title to the small plots of land on
423 which their houses are built. Some loans are available
[452] to them for building houses. Non-crofters have access
[654] to the various subsidies available to all agriculturalists,
such as the subsidies for raising hill sheep and beef
[829] cattle. There is still the feeling, however, that
crofters have rights which non-crofters do not have
and that in conflicts over scarce goods crofters have

241 178 423 829 the edge over non-crofters. "Squatters can do what they like, cut peats, put sheep and cattle on the common grazing, but this is a privilege, not a right."

The clerk of a grazings committee says, "When it comes to an argument between a crofter and a squatter, the crofter always wins. A squatter has rights only with the grazing committee's permission. If one crofter disagrees, the squatter is out."

241 423 578 A squatter muses bitterly, "I wanted crofting status because I wanted to get a Department of Agriculture grant to build a house. I work on the peat road; I go to all the fanks. But at a township meeting, they didn't want me to get crofting status. They were afraid I would start grabbing peat banks or apportionments in the common grazing or something. There's your brotherly love for you."

311 654 4. Subsidies: In the section entitled "Changing Land Use" I suggested that the availability of subsidies has encouraged a more specialized investment in agricultural activites.

654 829 241 The villagers are keenly aware of outside institutions which give money. They speak to each other about forms which they receive from the Department of Agriculture and the Crofters Commission, in much the same way as they are curious about the number of tweeds which another

654 person has. The gigantic bureaucracy of government
829 agencies is mysterious and unpredictable. One can
241 never be certain when or for what reason another economic increment may come. "I used to throw away a form from the Department of Agriculture until I found out from somebody that you could get money with it. You say you're planting so much of your land in oats, and later you fill out another form saying you didn't get a very good return, and they send you a deficiency payment."

241 For some crofters, the requirements of the subsidies
242 have affected the extent and techniques of agricultural
654 activity. For example, one man used to work his land
178 in the way that his ancestors learned would bring best results: lazybeds were aligned in strips that would drain well and catch the sun, and stones were left in the soil to capture the sun's warmth and thereby facilitate the growth of potatoes. Now he has merged the separate strips, cleared the stones, and divided the land into units that allow him easily to calculate how much he has used for what crops, because to be eligible for a particular grant, a certain percentage of arable land must be ploughed with grass seed and rotated with other crops.

241 The Department of Agriculture and the Crofters
654 Commission often overlap in their subsidy-giving functions.

241 The Department of Agriculture dispenses subsidies to
654 all Scottish farmers, not just to crofters, and handles
[433] about 210,000 claims per year. Lewis produces 0.4%
of the agricultural output of Scotland, and 8.1% of the
agricultural output of the Scottish islands.

654 The major subsidies available to Scottish farmers,
233 including crofters, are for raising hill cattle, beef
calves, and hill and upland sheep. Sheep and cattle
subsidies were made available in 1941, in the early years
of the war, to increase their production. During wartime,
Britain was more dependent than formerly on her own
resources, and attempted to encourage production. Between
[458] the two world wars, agriculture had undergone a recession,
especially in the hills and uplands, because of a number
of events in world economics, such as competition from
New Zealand and Argentina in production of cattle. As
part of the scheme of the postwar Labor government,
agricultural support was made statutory.

For example, a man who keeps hill cattle may receive L18.70 per cow as well as L5 for each acre cultivated to feed his cattle during the winter. He receives L5 for each cow which is tested for brucellosis. In the 1970-71 agricultural year, Shawbost received over L2,000 in sheep and cattle subsidies, divided among 37 men receiving subsidies for cattle and 36 men receiving subsidies for sheep.

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241 Subsidies for fertilizer and for lime to neutralize acidic soil also originated during wartime, when the government was trying to control scarce materials. Agricultural subsidies in the form of cropping grants and improvement grants are available both to crofters (from the Crofters Commission) and to others of the same economic status as crofters (from the Department of Agriculture). Most of the improvement grants are for fencing (rather than drainage or other improvements). To receive a cropping grant, a farmer must sow one-third of all tilled acres in grass, and apply three hundredweights of fertilizer to each acre planted with oats, barley or wheat. Lewis is in the third or poorest category of agricultural land designated by the Department of Agriculture, and receives the highest rate of subsidy (L11 per acre, as opposed to L5 per acre for good land).

For some people, even the incentive of subsidies is not sufficient to stimulate them to farm or keep live-
654 stock. "It's too expensive to work the croft. There's
241 not enough return to make it worth it. The Department
829 of Agriculture gives you a subsidy for fertilizer, but it still costs you something if you're not doing much of anything else with the land. The croft is a sideline; it helps you keep busy; you grow some of your own food. But you've got to make a living some other way."

233 One crofter who gets subsidies says that he keeps
241 654 sheep and ploughs the land to feed them only as a "hobby."
523 He uses the word "hobby" because, in comparison with the
434 income he gets from working regularly in the mill, he
does not get a good return for his investment.

233 A crofter who has been weaving all his life says
288 that the income he receives from his cattle and sheep
434 does not compare with the income he receives from weaving.
654 Subsidies are counted as an important part of the income
he receives for the livestock. "Last year I got L28 for
a heifer--not a very good price, but then I got an L11
829 subsidy as well." He does not believe that anyone could
434 make a living from crofting alone. "You say some of the
241 people in Uist are able to make a living at it? They
might be getting social security as well, they're that
sly. Anyway, members of the family are probably sending
money home from sea or from the mainland. You need a
weekly wage. If the tweeds disappear, the only thing a
man could do would be to go to sea." (See Appendix C
for an example of the balance sheet of a croft.)

233 A few families work seriously at rearing cattle for
463 sale in local or town markets. These are usually
composed of several male adults, of which one or more
work in the mill or do weaving and someone is largely
000 responsible for croft work. Most of these people look

233 Most of these people look
829 askance at the idea of Britain joining the European
648 Economic Community. "If the Common Market comes, that
654 means no more subsidy for livestock. That'll mean the end of crofting. They'll get good prices for their beef, but feeding stuff will be very expensive."

"I don't know much about the Common Market, but I'm against it. They'll do away with the subsidies. If it weren't for the subsidies, most people just wouldn't bother with cattle and sheep; it wouldn't be worth their while, the feeding stuff is getting so
[246] expensive. The people here used to take in a hundred bags or so of potatoes to feed the stock. But the climate is so bad you don't know what kind of a return you're going to get, and the work is so hard it just isn't worth the bother, so people prefer to buy feeding stuff. And if you spend more on feeding your animals than you get for them, what's the use? Of course we've been here all our lives. It would be hard to leave. But if the weaving goes--"

"I was talking to my cousin in Glasgow. He says the cattle are going to be the big thing with the Common Market. The price of beef is going to go up. I don't think people here can keep cattle if they don't get the subsidy. They can't keep enough cattle, and they can't be sure of a good price every year."

233 As these quotations bring out, the subsidy enables
654 people to risk rearing cattle under conditions that
would otherwise make success very uncertain.

476 5. Communalism: Despite the decline in various
571 agricultural activities and the individuation of land
use, some activities persist which require mutual aid.
[484] Conditions of low geographical mobility, in which mutual
watchfulness and competitive gamesmanship have developed
(see section on "Social Marginality"), contribute to
the strong boundedness of the township network. There
is still competition over who begins an agricultural
[156] activity at a particular time of the year. No one wants
[221] to be so early that he stands out like an over-eager
novice running risks of frost or other bad weather, but
there is an element of pride in being the first to
314 harvest potatoes or bring in the peat. Almost everyone
571 cuts peat, a time-consuming and back-breaking job made
476 pleasanter with a large labor force; and every aspect
of the activity--the time of cutting and bringing in,
the length of time required to cut peats, the size of
the peats when dry, the type of meal served to the work
crew, the evenness of the final peat stack--is subject
to intense scrutiny.

F. The Decline in Self-Sufficiency

175 632 433 Until the second world war, when weavers began to earn larger sums of money for their weaving, the 175 463 township was relatively self-sufficient. The land was [241] more thoroughly cultivated, and the village boasted a number of local specialists. These specializations 175 463 were linked with particular family lines. Certain 592 families were blacksmiths; others were undertakers, joiners, cobblers, or midwives. As generations succeeded one another, occupations were not thrown open in the competitive, individualistic way of the mobile city. Certain occupations were seen to be "naturally" linked with particular families. Sometimes it was said that people of a particular family (which might include quite a number of collateral lines) had hereditary characteristics which suited them for particular occupations.

"Taggy was an expert bone-setter. He wasn't a doctor [959] at all, but he could set bones better than any doctor. And he used to let blood, when people were dizzy with threatening strokes, or had pneumonia. It was in the people. He was a direct descendent, through his mother, [827] of the Murrays of South Shawbost, the people who had the mill and were the blacksmiths for generations. He got that ability from them."

175 Whatever the rationalization, cobbler fathers begot
827 cobbler sons. The present postmaster's grandfather was
463 [205] the first postmaster in Shawbost, and when help is needed
in delivering the mail it is the postmaster's first
[767] cousins who are likely to help out. As late as the 1950's,
the township still had its own undertaker, a man who had
learned from his father the art of laying out and dressing
the body but who didn't like the job very much and was
happy enough to turn it over to an undertaker who
traveled from Stornoway.

463 The island has had a veterinarian, based in Stornoway,
[232] for the past 30 years or so. Earlier, certain blacksmiths
and farmers treated ailing livestock when the crofters
[278] [756] needed them. For human ailments, there were many cures
by plant and spell.

463 The man who was the last village blacksmith died
326 not long ago. His smithy was in the center of the village.
[342] His home and smithy were mortared stone buildings with
corrugated iron roofs that were once estate houses for
the men who worked the experimental farm established
by Sir James Matheson in what is now New Shawbost. The
blacksmith was also a shopkeeper and butcher. As a
463 326 blacksmith, his work was principally shoeing horses and
874 making harrows and peat-cutters, which he did with the
aid of one and sometimes two apprentices. One of his

463 One of his
326 apprentices was his sister's son, who built another
[874] smithy not far away. "This was the center of gossip.
[604] People gathered there while he shoed horses that came
[521] from Barvas to Carloway."

444 A number of shops were established in Shawbost
178 that sold clothing, cooking ware and groceries. At
[494] one time they numbered six altogether. These shops
also ran the first buses between the village and
[477] Stornoway. Gradually these businesses disappeared
[443] because of competition with larger companies. Mobile
grocery vans and butcher shops and bakers began coming
in the late 50's, and gradually took over the trade in
large parts of the island, undercutting the local businesses.
178 Income from weaving had already weakened self-sufficiency
434 derived from the intensive use of land and
571 sea and also weakened the formerly heavy reliance on
621 local ties and mutual aid. Today an army of town-dwelling
44 463 entrepreneurs and employees constitute a major
178 proportion of the traffic on the island roads. Grocers,
[472] fish dealers, bakers, sellers of soft drinks, garbage
[484] collectors, insurance salesmen, mobile banks, coal
dealers and others extend goods and services from
centralized sources to a market which has money to pay
for them. The island's participation in this extensive
market system is affected by its marginality to the

44 cities and industries of the larger society on which
128 the system depends. The geographical and social
marginality of the islands is discussed in Chapter 5.

Chapter 4

THE TOWNSHIP AS SOCIAL BOUNDARY SYSTEM

A. Social Boundary System

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Cohen (1969) has developed the concept of social boundary system, which I have found useful in investigating the sociocultural organization of the village of Shawbost, which has undergone major economic changes.

A social boundary system is a "network of social relations of people who are required and permitted to engage in a sphere of social activity (Cohen 1969: 104)." Within a society, a number of networks may be delineated, such as family, household, work group, community, and nation. Various spheres of social activity may also be delineated, such as educational, political and religious. The activities within these spheres may be performed in different networks. Persons in all societies are born into a kinship network, for example, and acquire expectations regarding rights and obligations vis-à-vis their kinsmen. However, the importance of kinsmen and the kinship network varies across societies, and within a particular society at different times in its history. Certain networks which were once very important may be

121 replaced in importance by other networks. Cohen draws upon Vogel's (1963) description of the middle class in modern Japan to illustrate changes in the importance of particular networks. Vogel demonstrates that the male work group has become an important network in present-day urban life in Japan, and that the previously important religious and kinship networks have declined in significance. With the rise of modern Japan as a nation-state, local communities have become less firmly bounded, and the work group has become a firmly bounded system.

A society may be characterized by the extent to which various networks of social relations within it are differentiated. This differentiation is a feature of sociocultural evolution, "an adaptation in the organization of social relations to the harnessing of increasingly effective energy systems (Cohen 1969: 105)." A network of social relations becomes firmly bounded when it is differentiated from other networks but is itself internally undifferentiated; role transposability and consensus are evident within the firmly bounded network.

A network of social relations is differentiated from other networks when role performance within it is independent of role performance in other networks (for example, in most urban-industrial societies, the role which a person plays in his family does not affect the role which he plays in his work group). Another indication of differentiation is the inability of members of one network to substitute for members of other networks in carrying out various activities (as reflected, for example, in the existence of specialists who earn their living by performing these activities. In some societies, for example, all members of the society are responsible for educating the children of that society. In other societies, occupational specialists earn their living by such an activity).

Within a firmly bounded network, members can substitute for each other and assume each other's roles. Such role transposability is evident in the "joint conjugal relationship" which Bott (1957) describes among certain families in London, in which husband and wife may substitute for each other in carrying out household tasks. In contrast, a weakly bounded network exists in the "segregated role relationship," in which husband and wife perform different tasks and have separate interests and activities; such a relationship is found in lower-class families who depend on extra-household kinsmen for aid (Bott 1957: 52-96).

A network of social relations is firmly bounded to the extent that dissent within the network is not tolerated, that is, to the extent that consensus is

121 maintained. Cohen (1969: 110) relates this emphasis on consensus to role transposability: "...sustained outspoken dissent among members of the network tends to define them as unlike each other and thus to make it difficult for them to substitute for each other in role performance." Allied with intolerance of dissent is the tendency to exclude external influences. Firm boundedness of a network is also indicated by the existence of rites of passage which govern admission to the network, and by the existence of other means by which persons and influences are excluded from the network.

A firmly bounded network competes with subsystems within it. For example, a community which has the characteristics of a firmly bounded system competes with kin groups, marital networks and strong friendships within it. It also competes with larger networks that serve the functions that are the same as those of the community, such as the maintenance of social order and the regulation of change. For example, a strongly bounded local community will conflict with a nation-state (cf. Cohen 1969: 111-117).

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128 In the following pages, the sociocultural organization of a rural Scottish township is described, and the changing characteristics of the township as social boundary system are discussed in relation to changing economic circumstances. Chapter 5 concerns the relationship

121 of the township with the larger society, and examines
128 the effect of geographical and social marginality on
the boundedness of the township network. Chapter 6
discusses two important networks of social relations
within the township.

B. Township as Social Boundary System

632 The township constitutes a relatively firmly bounded
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621 system, although its boundaries are weaker than formerly
when the township was relatively self-sufficient
[476] economically. Township members worked together in small
fishing crews, and families relied on each other for
help when members of the family were away from the island
"at the fishing."

621 Relatives were expected to give priority to helping
476 each other. According to one proverb, "A relative is
602 your best friend." First and second cousins were
[539]
[605] considered especially close, but knowledge of one's
kinsmen extended to at least the fourth generation.
602 Ties of kinship became evident in ceremonies such as
576 funerals and weddings. One Gaelic proverb says, "You
585 know who your relatives are at weddings and funerals."
764
[539] At weddings the onus was on the members of the bridal
party to remember their relatives. "You have to sit
and calculate who is closely related, and all those

602 people will be doing the same. If they think they're
576 585 close enough to be invited, they'll be annoyed if you
764 don't include them." At funerals, relatives of the
deceased to about third cousins were expected to
participate.

621 When a population has lived in a small area for
602 generations, a dense network of kinship develops. This
476 fact, and the importance placed on mutual aid among
571 fellow villagers, fostered the feeling that the network
of township members, who ploughed, fished and tended
cattle and sheep together, was also a network of kinsmen.
"We're all the same people." "It's all one family here."
Occupational and kinship spheres of social activity
[539] commingled. The importance of neighbors in contrast
with relatives was reflected in such proverbs as, "A
neighbor close at hand is better than a relative in a
distant land."

621 The nuclear family did not, according to Cohen's
594 criteria, constitute a firmly bounded system. Then as
[178] now, women preferred the company of their "own kind,"
[571] that is, the company of other women. The men worked
and spent periods of recreation with other men. Children
621 596 spent about as much time in the homes of grandparents,
uncles or fellow villagers as they did in their own
000 homes. A 60-year-old woman remembers that it was a

A 60-year-old woman remembers that it was a
621 common practice, when she was young, for children from
571 large families to live for as long as six weeks with
476 other families who were relatively better off. They
would help harvest the hay or the potatoes or bring
in the peat in return for food, lodging and perhaps
some clothing. "They usually ate better than they did
at home." The children were not necessarily relatives
of the families with whom they boarded.

621 Strong friendship, that is, the kind of friendship
572 associated with mobile urban life in which persons
confide in each other and share secrets and build up
an individual relationship based on extensive knowledge
[602] of one another, was nonexistent. A "friend" was a
relative, or someone who gave aid when it was needed.

621 Today it is sometimes said, "It used to be that
178 your relatives were your best friends; now your best
572 friends are better than your relatives." An old man
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[602] will meet another on the road and say, "I used to see
more of you when you needed me." Neighbors used to
[231] share sheep that were killed; now households kill and
[251] consume their own sheep, and freeze the meat which they
cannot use immediately. Groups that walked out together
[464] to the peat to finish the job in a single day are being
replaced by individual family units that can motor out
000 and do the job in stages. People prefer to give money

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621 People prefer to give money
178 in exchange for car rides or other help, including peat-
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829 cutting, because "than you're independent." Friendships
577 are still weak, relative to friendships in urban
621 settings. Most information which is shared between
[369] individuals rapidly enters the pool of communal gossip.
[521]
[476] Although many persons emphasize the importance of mutual
aid in defining a friend, some emphasize the ability to
confide and keep secrets.

621 Today many of the younger villagers do not know
178 their relatives to the extent that their elders did.
602 In one family, a girl who was about to get married had
[585] to ask her brother, who was the only one of the siblings
[576] interested in kinship connections, whom to invite to the
wedding. It is still useful to retain an inventory of
602 one's relatives. "I have cousins in Glasgow and
484 Australia that I've never seen, but if I ever go there
I'll have a place to stay." With the increase in
[178] transportation and income, more islanders are taking
brief trips away from the island. During these trips,
they almost always stay with relatives.

857 It is frequently said that children are now "cheekier,"
577 less inclined to run errands and obey orders meekly, and
829 that they prefer to watch television or read books by
178 themselves to playing with each other.

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[426]
Despite these tendencies, an individual is still enmeshed in familial and village ties. Villagers walk in and out of each others' houses without knocking; only a "stranger" knocks. Goods such as tape recorders, binoculars and books are passed around the village; people even borrow each others' reading glasses.

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Children are "borrowed" as well. They are loaned out to relatives and neighbors to run errands, or may even live with them. They are scolded as often by a neighbor or other villager as by a parent. A child might be told, "When someone (any adult) tells you to do something, you do it, no matter who that person is." The parents of one household are criticized for taking their children's side against other children and other parents. "He's teaching his children not to mix with others. One child is as good as another. They may be good one day, but they're likely to be bad the next." A child or adult who enjoys spending time by himself is still considered extremely odd. An important criterion by which someone's mental health or general personality is evaluated is whether or not he "mixes" well. It is fairly common for childless households to "adopt" a child of neighbors or relatives; that is, the child spends a great deal of time with them. They may go to the child's house to put him to bed at night, or the

597 621 child may come to spend nights or longer periods of time with them.

476 621 (576) To some extent villagers are still dependent on each other for various kinds of help. It is considered extremely bad manners to refuse labor, a tool, or food to anyone who requests them. If someone refuses to aid another, people say, "What will he do when he needs help?" [443] This attitude has made the island a paradise for the few salesmen who, in the last few prosperous years, have started to visit its communities; villagers find it difficult to say no to anyone who comes to their door with a request, including the request that they buy something.

621 574 844 A woman in childbirth was formerly attended by a local midwife, and kept in bed for two or three weeks. "Other women, both relatives and friends, came and stayed with them at night, fixing them warm tea and milk, whispering bhronag bochd (poor soul), how awful you look..." just as today the neighbors gather at times of illness and death. [178] [743] It is more difficult for neighbors to come to the bedsides of young mothers of today, who are all taken to the hospital in Stornoway to have their babies; but the neighbors manage to visit the hospital, which has no choice but to ignore its rule of only two visitors per bed at a time.

621 513 858 The first thing that is said when for some reason a woman is left alone in the house is, "Who's going to go and sleep with her?" Often a child will be sent from a neighboring family, not always relatives, to stay with her at night. 621 592 888 As in the past, it is not uncommon for a childless elderly couple or single person alone on a croft to take in a young, homeless couple, to whom they may or may not be related. The young couple cares for the old person or persons, and inherits the croft when they die.

602 476 "Keeping up the relation" is the process by which relatives sustain interaction and expectations of mutual aid even though their relatedness becomes more distant with succeeding generations. 605 "I've got cousins in Ness that I stay with at the Communions. They're getting on into the third generation now." A cousin is a cousin even to the 42nd degree (Williams 1963: 142), as long as there is reason to sustain the relationship. "I know we're related, but I can't quite place it." "We's a bit related. I think she was a MacPhail before she married." "I don't quite know how we're related, but my mother and his mother considered it a close relationship, and he has kept it up."

621 626 582 Every villager has a vast amount of information about other villagers and their families, which may be

621 used on different occasions, for example, to discourage
626 deviant behavior or certain marital alliances. Any sign
582 of physical or emotional disability in someone planning
to get married invites an attempt by other villagers to
[539] discourage an alliance. According to a Gaelic proverb,
"If you want to be praised, die; if you want to be
criticized, marry (*Ma tha thu airson do mholadh, basaich*;
ma tha thu airson do chaineadh, pos)." The villagers
621 626 consider not only the behavior of the person but of his
582 ancestors. The individual is perceived as belonging to
827 a family unit which through many generations has manifested
certain physical and behavioral traits. Traits of behavior
such as shyness, heavy drinking, stealing and tight-fistedness are interpreted as hereditary traits. "It's in
the blood (*Tha e anns an t'fhuil*)." "It's in the people."
[463] Particular occupations are also associated with families.
Stornoway, which is not so "urban" as to have a constant
turnover of population, contains many examples of
occupations passed down through generations.

632 In Chapter 3 I mentioned the development of several
578 groups in the crofting township which seem to be in conflict
with the township as a strongly bounded system. People
who keep only sheep have come to blows with those who keep
both sheep and cattle; and a distinction between crofters
and non-crofters may be seen. Many persons have preferred

632 578 to neglect crofting and to concentrate on weaving. Those who still participate in crofting activities may neglect their communal obligations, such as going out on the moor after sheep, and may prefer to harvest crops, cut peat or perform other agricultural activities independent of other villagers.

632 182 462 Despite these tendencies, certain criteria of firm boundedness are still found in the township network. All the adult males of the township, including non-crofters, are responsible for serving as officers in the township grazing committee. The committee draws up rules for the [654] organization of communal crofting activities, and applies for grants from the Crofters Commission or Department of Agriculture, for example, to build a new township fence, plant trees as shelter belts for livestock, extend a peat road, or to fence and reseed areas of moorland in "township [464] reseeding schemes" (see Chapter 2). All adult males of the township are expected to provide labor to implement such plans.

632 571 666 Township meetings, chaired by the clerk of the grazing committee, are held twice a year. A vote is taken when any decision is to be made. The vote is usually unanimous, as all discussion, argument and persuasion have occurred before the meeting, and those who disagree

632 with the decision which they know is to be made usually
571 do not attend the meeting. Thus, apparent consensus is
666 always maintained.

632 Changes in the character of the township as social
178 boundary system are apparent in ceremonial occasions such as weddings and funerals, which will be discussed in the following pages.

584 1. Courtship and Marriage: Courtship occurred during the dark hours when the older members of a household had gone to bed. A great deal of courting was done in
[574) company. Because transportation was limited, groups of young people went together to dances; and on other nights, bands of young men would visit a house in which several girls were sleeping together, climb in through a window, and perhaps lie beside the girls, fully dressed, filling the dark with whispered jokes. Such a custom, a form of bundling, was called "night visiting" (ruith na h-oidhche); the male visitor was called caraid na h-oidhche, "companion of the night."

When couples began serious courting, they would meet outside at night, or the girl would let her bramar (sweetheart) into the house after the old people had gone
[831 to bed. A couple would never consider walking hand in hand along the road during the day. Boys and girls were seated separately in school, went around in separate

584 [834] groups on the sheilings or within the village as they were growing up, and even during courtship maintained a joking, somewhat rude interaction. "If he says he wouldn't touch her with a barge pole, he's obviously smitten." Someone considering the dangers of marrying an outsider[1] commented, "A devil you know is better than a devil you don't know."

584 178 [493] Now that facilities for transportation have increased, couples tend to pair off in cars rather than go in groups. They may even be seen together on a date in [535] town. Activities such as dances still begin late in the night, lasting from about 12:30 a.m. until early morning. The seriousness of a relationship is kept secret for as long as possible, but weddings today require long-term planning because wedding dinners are 574 584 held in hotels rather than within the village. At an earlier time, serious intentions were announced only a few weeks before the wedding, at a reiteach or dinner party which signified a betrothal. Reiteach also means "disentangling" or "reconciling," and was described by one person as a means of "pouring oil

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[1] The term "outsider" usually connotes non-Gaelic-speaking, but may also refer to someone from outside the village.

574 584 on troubled waters," or bringing the two families together.[2]

585 The most important of the ceremonies surrounding marriage was not the church service (posadh) but the wedding dinner and dance following the church service (banais, from bean meaning "woman" or "wife," and feis meaning "feast").

"House weddings," as they were called, were held [431] in the home of the bride. For several weeks beforehand, neighbors and relatives brought gifts to the bride's house, where they were displayed in a room set aside for them along with the dresses to be worn by the bride and

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574 584 184 [2] Morag Macleod of the School of Scottish Studies describes a custom still existing on the Isle of Scalpay off the Isle of Harris, called reiteach mor (big reiteach), in contrast with the reiteach bheag (small reiteach) or simple dinner party which existed until fairly recently on mainland Harris. The reiteach mor is a dramatic event involving a humorous exchange between male speakers for "the groom's side," and male spokesmen for "the bride's side." The bride is hidden, and the groom's men ask for the bride indirectly. They desire a sheep, perhaps, or a length of tweed. The desired object constitutes a theme which is developed in humorous give-and-take between the two sides, as various females are brought out one by one by the bride's people, from the most undesirable old maid to the bridesmaid and finally to the bride. Until the bride finally appears, the groom's spokesmen must find something wrong with each female presented, along the lines of the chosen theme. The sheep's fleece is not curly enough, and so on. The bride sits at the table after she appears, is given a glass of whiskey which she sips and then passes to her fiance, and the performance is over.

585 bridesmaid(s). The house was filled each night with
[431] visitors bringing new gifts or coming to see the latest
additions. Enough presents were given during this
[203] time to set up a household. Invitations to the wedding
were issued verbally, by persons going around to each
[602] house. Anyone could come to the church ceremony, which
was relatively informal and jovial, but only the
"closest" relatives were invited to the sumptuous wedding
dinner which followed the service: the bride and groom,
their parents, aunts and uncles, first cousins and
usually second cousins. Many more were invited to the
wedding supper which started after the dinner, at about
10:00 p.m., and continued throughout the night.

Three main nights were distinguished, although
585 preparations and festivities might go on for weeks. The
252 first night was the night before the wedding, when women
of the village brought hundreds of chickens, which they
plucked and cooked. Meat, usually mutton, was also cooked
and sliced. Butter was rolled into balls. Neighbors
brought milk and other provisions and assisted in the
baking for a week beforehand.

585 On the second night, hundreds of villagers ate the
[535] chickens and mutton prepared for the wedding supper,
[533] and danced to the music of a piper or other musicians.
[273] Many young boys had their first taste of beer or whiskey
on these occasions.

585 on these occasions. At some point during the night the bride and groom were prepared for their wedding night together. The bride's female companions undressed her, prepared her for bed, and put her into the bed with a hot water bottle. She shared some sherry with them, and they went out, whereupon the groom was brought in by his male companions. After much joking the couple were left together.

[574] On the third night, a dinner was given for the older persons who had not been able to come to the "big" wedding.

[273] [431] For some time after the wedding, the married couple visited relatives and neighbors who had been unable to come to the wedding, taking a bottle of whiskey with them.

585 178 [342] [485] House weddings declined in number during the war when food was rationed, and as more persons changed from the "black house" to the less easily cleaned and more elaborately furnished "white house." Most weddings are now held in hotels, and consist of a single wedding dinner and dance; they are often held on Thursdays, the day of the banais in the past. The emphasis on community participation still exists: even though the practice of holding hotel weddings has limited the number of guests, an effort is made to invite someone from each household in the neighborhood. In part to avoid disappointing the

In part to avoid disappointing the
585 vast number of relatives who by custom must be invited
178 but for whom there is now not enough room, many weddings
[602] are held away from the island in places such as Inverness
[431] and Glasgow. Gifts are still given in great numbers and
displayed, despite the decrease in numbers attending
the wedding dinner and the feeling that only those who
are invited to the wedding should give presents. The
[202] custom still exists of neighborhoods or entire villages
placing flags outside their homes on the day of a villager's
wedding (except when the wedding is held away from the
island); isolated flags within a village signify that
the household is related to someone in a neighboring
village who is getting married. And when the wedding
car has picked up the bride and is leaving for the hotel
in town, the road is often littered with barrels and other
barriers.

Couples now often leave the wedding dinner and dance and go to undisclosed destinations for their honeymoon. But when they return to the community they must undergo a simple rite of passage that gives sanction to their new social status. On the first Sunday following their return, they are expected to come to church with the other members of the bridal party, a process called kirkadh (a slightly Gaelicized rendition of Scottish "kirking").

585 For some weeks after returning, the couple goes visiting
178 with a bottle. The scope of visits seems to have narrowed to close relatives unable to attend the wedding, and sometimes the custom is referred to as old-fashioned.
[431] The bride usually mails pieces of bridal cake to
[205] relatives who were unable to attend the wedding.

758 2. Death: At a time of illness or injury, an
574 individual may see persons he has not seen for years. The house is filled with a constant flow of visitors, and the visitors recount every detail of a sick person's
[763] pallor and movement. The room is usually occupied by visitors when a person breathes his last.

763 In the past, work ceased in every house in the
461 surrounding neighborhood when a person died. This no
[178] longer occurs. (The story is told of a weaver who called
[288] a mill in Stornoway to say that he could not finish an urgent tweed because there had been a death in the village, and was told, "You keep on weaving till the
[535] weaver dies.") However, dances in the village are
[444] cancelled, and the bothan (an isolated hut in which liquor is sold illegally) may close. Outdoor work, such as peat-cutting, which would be widely seen is avoided.

763 Word of the death spreads throughout the village and
[203] beyond within a few hours. From an immense, accumulated inventory, memories of the deceased are brought out,

763 relived and shared. The person's exact age and the
764 identity of his closest kin are discussed. A van is
574 immediately dispatched to bring benches from the church,
[493] which are set up throughout the house of the deceased,
and over the next few days a constant stream of visitors
[431] fills the benches. The visitors bring tea, sugar,
biscuits and other provisions for the days and nights
of communal trial. The tigh fhaire, "house of watching,"
as this wake is called, continues until the day of the
funeral.

764 In the past, persons sat up all night with the body.
[825] "It took so long to get a coffin. You didn't want to
[178] go in and find half the face eaten away by rats." This
custom is dying out, but lights are usually left on in
the room in which the coffin is placed. When an all-night
wake occurs, the atmosphere is one of relaxed story-telling
and the sad laughter of reminiscence.

764 At least two nights of "waking" usually precede the
574 funeral. During this time, hundreds of villagers attend
[152] the tigh fhaire. Grief is expressed throughout the vast
network in which the dead person was enmeshed. On rare
occasions when a single night precedes burial, the house
is filled to overflowing.

Throughout the day and evening, waves of newcomers
enter, and other sitters slip quietly away. Kinswomen of

764 the deceased or the remaining family assist in preparing
574 endless cups of tea, using the provisions that are brought by the visitors. The newcomers enter, exchange greetings, memories, sighs and moral judgements in rapid whispers. "Oich, oich... that should teach us, we're all going to go. That's how it was meant to be. It makes you wonder why we live at all, well, well." They recall other deaths. "That was a bad death. His liver was bad, and he turned yellow, then all black...."
[152] They weep, circumspectly observe the appearance of the
(197] room and its occupants, and speak only in Gaelic, the language of hearth and heart.

764 The minister usually attends a prayer meeting which
793 is held in the tigh fhaire around midnight of the night before the funeral, but his presence is not necessary. The prayer meeting may be conducted by the elders. The elders may also hold the service which precedes the burial. The minister may walk for a short distance in the funeral procession or speak a brief few words at the graveside, but his role in the community drama is minimal.

764 At least one person from all households within the
621 village is expected to go to the tigh fhaire of someone
592 who has died within the village, "to show respect." The male head of the household is expected to attend the

764 [621] [592] funeral procession in which the coffin is carried for about half a mile from the house to the waiting hearse. Over 100 men usually walk in these processions. The more well-known the person or unexpected the death, the larger the procession is likely to be. Relatives [602] of the deceased walk at the head of the procession, at the head and foot of the coffin, while other villagers take turns carrying the bier. The pallbearers serve in relays. Eight men carry the coffin, four on each side, and are replaced frequently by pairs of men who assume the rear positions. The two who have been displaced at the head of the coffin stand outside the line, facing outward, until the procession has filed past them, whereupon they join the end of the procession.

764 178 273 In the past, coffins were carried for miles from the house to the cemetery. The procession rested periodically, and the men usually carried an earthenware jug of whiskey (piggy uisge beatha) "to ward off the cold." The custom of giving a glass of whiskey to men as they left the house to carry the coffin was still recently followed in Skye; and in some areas a funeral is still evaluated by the amount of whiskey available for consumption ("That was a good funeral"). Tales are told of coffins buried without bodies.

764 178 [493] Today coffins are brought to the cemetery in a hearse, but the procession still carries the coffin for a half mile or so to the hearse. The women gather outside the house in the biting wind, huddled together, beginning to sob as the heavy line of dark-coated, slowly-moving men bear part of themselves away. In one village on the west side, the women circled the coffin as it left the house, chanting, "You are leaving us, you are leaving us!"

764 [767] [435] Graveyards are maintained by members of the community. A cemetery committee collects dues of five shillings a year from all households for the upkeep of the cemetery. Relatives and neighbors dig the graves of their fellow villagers.

767 In 1911, a funeral society called the West of Lewis
Funeral Association was founded with the original
intention of bringing back the bodies of men and women
who had died when they were away from the island "at the
[435] fishing." Persons from Borve to Berneray pay two
shillings a year to the Association, which at present
has about L4,000 invested in bonds. A similar association
exists in other parts of the island. A person may join
between the ages of 12 and 40, after which he is not
eligible for membership. A member who has left the
island must continue to send in his dues, or members of

767 his family must maintain the payments. Many persons who have settled in cities on the British mainland or abroad are not concerned with retaining membership in the Association, but members of their family who remain within the village usually continue to pay their dues for them. Even if in death, the "exiles" eventually return to home and community.

764 [423] Families buy cemetery plots for as many as six to eight persons. The deceased is buried in an area designated as belonging to his family. He is not buried alone but beside his parents and their unmarried siblings if he is unmarried, or with his spouse. "I wouldn't like the idea of being cremated. I want to be buried with my family." Even though a woman is buried beside her husband, her maiden name is placed on the coffin. Often neighbors have plots near each other.

[609] A special part of the cemetery is reserved for strangers. A "man from out" remains an outsider, even in death.

Chapter 5

GEOGRAPHICAL AND SOCIAL MARGINALITY

182 Despite the growth of the Harris Tweed industry and the gradual disappearance of some of the techniques and expectations associated with heavy reliance on the land and the sea, an important factor which helps to sustain some of these patterns is the social and geographical marginality of the islanders.

175 When the young men who survived the second world
[729] war returned to the island, most households still had
[231]
[407] horses to cultivate the croft, but a few years later
175 the tractors replaced the horses. The Labor government,
657 which came into power after the war, passed legislation
which extended the processes of centralization that had
proceeded since the breakdown of the clan system. The
National Health Service was established. Free milk
[871] became available in schools. More scholarships (called
"bursaries") became available for further schooling.
[207] Television came in the 1960's. In short, the islander
was exposed to a number of new alternatives.

182 To the extent that persons became involved in these possibilities, the island became peripheral or marginal. The island has become more dependent upon central

182 government bodies and industries in cities on the mainland, rather than being relatively self-sufficient as it was at a previous time. [166] [181] The periodic return of relatives to the island reflects this peripheralness, as do feelings of inferiority among the islands. The island has become not only geographically but socially marginal.

A. Geographical Marginality

121 131 182 Geographical marginality refers to the distance of the islanders from various economic and administrative centers on which they depend. Because they are distant, they are more likely to suffer breaks in channels of communication with these centers, as when storms prevent boats from docking. They are "marginal" because they depend on central sources rather than being self-contained; and the difficulties entailed in this marginality encourage the retention of techniques and patterns of interaction derived from the days of relative self-sufficiency. The anomalous combinations of old and new found in the township may be attributed to such marginality.

121 A "strategy" may be thought of as a pattern of behavior which develops in a particular history of reinforcement, the parameters of this reinforcement

121 being determined by conditions of culture, such as
121 political and economic conditions. Under conditions
178 of gradual centralization of economic and political
182 systems, the geographically marginal crofting areas
have evolved strategies, some of which puzzle agencies
concerned with development or other aspects of
governmental process.

178 Before the North of Scotland Hydro-Electric Board
365 began to operate in the crofting counties, not more
511 than one croft in every hundred had electricity; but
by the end of 1951, one in every six holdings had been
supplied (Taylor 1954: 20). "The light" came to
[354] Shawbost in 1951. Before then, the islanders used
[177] Tilley lamps, a Canadian invention; and before then,
[312] double-wick paraffin lamps. Piped water came a few
[464] years later, around 1955; it was brought from a nearby
loch, and the construction work gave temporary jobs to
local people. The availability of these services
[344] facilitated the building of county council houses,
[342] which many welcomed as providing a relief to the
congestion caused in part by rules against building
more than one house on a croft. But, paradoxically,
[651] with larger, better homes and all these services came
a decrease in the advantages of living in a crofting
township: property was assessed and people began paying
rates or taxes.

288 The Harris Tweed industry has provided a higher
434 standard of living, but income from this source is
[458] inconsistent. The standards developed during prosperous
[342] times cannot be met during difficult times. Many-roomed
[336] houses with indoor plumbing are more heavily taxed than
[661] smaller, less modern homes; loans must be repayed;
[426] a car and a television once gotten are difficult to
[745] give up. A weaver must pay for his insurance stamp,
[651] which amounts to over L70 a year; and income tax takes
a large percentage of a person's income, in large lump
sums which are paid twice a year rather than in small
amounts throughout the year. When income fluctuates,
any constant demand for monetary outlay constitutes a
liability.

654 To many persons outside the island concerned with
181 Highland and Island development, Lewis has a reputation
for "subsidy-grabbing." According to one official,
"The people are too used to getting subsidies. They
tend to sit back and rely on the subsidies, which
makes it difficult to develop the place."

[829] "We pay tax," said one weaver. "Why not get back
what we can in subsidy?"

Income tax collectors shake their heads in despair
651
434 at the thought of trying to get a true estimate of a
crofter's income, except for jobs such as weaving for

651 which official records are kept by the mills. If you
434 say jokingly to a fisherman who has brought in a large
catch that he should put some money aside for the
income tax man, he is likely to reply, "He'll have to
463 catch me first." A tradesman may be earning large sums
434 of money doing local work as a skilled specialist at
[745] the same time that he is collecting social security.
A man may move in and out of a number of different jobs,
[171] and never report his income. "Occupational pluralism"
(cf. Brox 1968) rather than economic specialization has
developed as a strategy in various countries along the
North Atlantic fringe, such as Iceland, the Faroes,
northern Norway and Newfoundland, as well as the west
coast and islands of Scotland. In these marginal areas,
income from specialized occupations is, in the long run,
unpredictable and inconsistent.

178 In times of national economic depression, strikes,
458 shifts between socialist and conservative governments,
241 and other crises, crofting provides an alternative
175 strategy. During the last war, many islanders who had
722 left the island (including some who had been quite
166 prosperous in the cities) returned to spend the duration
of the war in the village, glad of the relative security
provided by the relative abundance of food and less strict
000 rationing. During a huge snow-fall that occurred on

175 During a huge snow-fall that occurred on
261 Lewis in the 1950's, the mobile grocery vans and other
[132] supply vehicles could not come out to the west side,
[443] and a group of men had to make an expedition into town
for provisions, after which many families made certain
that they always had a good supply of meal, salted
[404] mackerel and herring. Many villagers have gotten deep
[365] freezers to store beef and mutton; others say they do
not trust the freezers, that a failure in electricity--
which occasionally happens in this region of gales and
far-away repairmen--would bring disaster if they depended
458 fully on them for keeping their meat. When the tweed
226 industry is going through one of its periodic depressions,
more men go out more often to fish. "I've been going
out every night for the last week or so. I don't have
a tweed, and I won't have one for the next six weeks.
I don't know what I'm going to do; maybe I'll go back to
sea. Three of us caught one hundred mackerel last
[251] night. I salted my share, and didn't give any of them
away. These are the hard times. We're going to need
them during the next six weeks."

233 A few people raise beef cattle, depending largely
[654] on subsidies for encouragement to do so. A few are
[234] beginning to keep cows again for milk, giving as their
[435] reasons that freight charges make the bottled milk too
[434]
[648]

233

234 435 costly, that the Common Market will soon drive up milk
434 prices, and that income from the weaving has become too
648 uncertain.

412 Many tools and techniques associated with crofting
178 have disappeared: the flail for threshing oats (two
pieces of wood joined with leather); the sheepskin
stretched over wood with holes burned into it, to separate
chaff and grain; rope made of plaited heather and straw.
241 Each spring the byre was cleaned of its accumulated dung
[221] and urine, and this was turned into the ground along
[237] [824] with seaweed. Such tools and techniques remain among
[173] the older villagers as a "memory culture" which may be
[887] mobilized under changed conditions, as when alternatives
to crofting are no longer available or are too costly.
However, the longer crofting is neglected, the less it
will provide an alternative strategy. "The artificial
241 fertilizers are ruining the land; that's why the
824 turnips are full of maggots and the potatoes turn to
[233] water." As the rushes grow and clog the drains and
streams—rushes that used to be eaten by the horses and
cattle and which are now left untouched by the sheep—
the land becomes unfit even for grazing. "I'd rather
work the land than the blinkin' loom, but we tried the
potatoes, turnips and cabbage last year, and lost them
all to the maggots. You lose heart after that."

241 178 Crofting constitutes a dormant strategy which can be mobilized if deterioration of land has not proceeded too far, and if the skills of land use are not lost by succeeding generations who have grown up in an environment which presented them with more appealing strategies.

B. Social Marginality

166 464 **1. Linguistic Distinctiveness:** Social marginality began when the Highlander had to leave his place of origin and go to the cities of the south in search of employment. [197] The feature which most distinguished him was his Gaelic speech.

101 186 648 In Glasgow the common word for Highlander is "teuchter," a slang word with derogatory implications which, according to one theory, developed when Gaelic speakers coming into English-speaking cities mispronounced the word "sugar" so that it sounded like "teuchter." [829] (Glasgow Highlanders have developed their own defensive explanation: when the civilized Highlanders came down among the uneducated barbarians of the south, they came as tutors, a word which their uneducated Lowland pupils mispronounced.) According to a university student from the islands, the word was once used by the English to refer to the Scottish Lowlanders.

522 In nation-wide comic strips and jokes, the Highlander
181 plays the role of the clown, the rustic country cousin.
The comic strip "Angus Og" portrays a kilted Highlander,
sly and canny behind his apparent simplicity, tricking
the landlord and searching for the Loch Ness monster.
Stories of the lazy, dour crofter abound.[1]

166 When young men go away to the Army or Navy or to
181 work on the mainland, they say that they feel like
175 "foreigners." "Thirty years ago the island was very
166 isolated. It was difficult to get away. There were
182 so few education grants available. I got my teaching
871 certificate and wanted to get a post back on the island,
but was told there wouldn't be a vacancy for another
fifteen years. So I went down to England, and found
I had to be at least as good as an Englishman if not
better in my job to get ahead."

177 "When I went into the RAF, I had never seen light
365 switches because we used paraffin lamps. An English
354 chap told me to turn the light on, and I didn't know
which way meant on or off. That memory still sticks in me."

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[1] Even a high official in the Highlands and Islands Development Board tells a joke, that is "presently going round Westminster," of the Spaniard who approached the Highlander and told him of the word mañana which he translated as "Don't do today what you can put off till tomorrow," asking if there was a corresponding word in Gaelic. "In Gaelic," replied the Highlander, "we have no word that conveys such a sense of urgency."

177 "I was in the Navy during the last war. We were
156 in Norway, and got an invitation to visit the palace.
I didn't go. I was afraid I'd make a mess of things."

"This place has an inferiority complex. It's mainland-oriented; so you feel outlandish."

575 The new director of an association which promotes
197 the speaking of Gaelic is a Lowland Scot who learned
186 Gaelic when he was in England. He was working in England
[181] and, as a Scotsman, felt so much like a foreigner that
he decided "to be a real foreigner"—so he studied Gaelic. Motives which prompted legislation protecting crofting also lie behind the development of organizations which attempt to protect and preserve the Gaelic language.

[175] An Comunn Gaidhealach, the Highland Association
which promotes the speaking of Gaelic, was founded in 1891 in a town on the mainland, and has always been urban-based. Eighty years passed before the association established its headquarters in Stornoway; but the headquarters were relegated to hindquarters when the director found that he needed to be on the mainland to exert pressure on influential organizations for aid and support.
[193] The organization is condemned by ministers on the island,
who see it as an organization that sponsors light-hearted
[214] singing. The magazines and books which it publishes or
sponsors are seldom read by the rural islanders. The

575 197 186 [659] The organization receives a large proportion of its funds from the Scottish Education Department, whose statutory duty is to foster the speaking of Gaelic in Gaelic-speaking areas. In 1970-71 a series of evening meetings were sponsored by An Comunn in Stornoway; but the serious meetings, such as readings of Gaelic poetry, were attended largely by schoolmasters.

[648] Associations which sponsor Highland dancing and the opportunity to get together with other Gaelic speakers thrive in Glasgow, London, Toronto and Detroit, everywhere but in the Gaelic-speaking Highlands. Such associations serve important functions in situations of interaction between Gaelic speakers and members of the dominant society; they provide identity and self-defense against those who react to them as members of a lower-status minority group.

535 186 648 A girl who teaches Gaelic in Glasgow and comes home to the island only for holidays never goes to the island dances, but loves going to the dances sponsored by the Lewis and Harris Society in Glasgow. All the young people from the islands come, and dance away accumulated insults in a fiery sense of belonging.

464 197 186 571 A girl who worked in hotels on the mainland found herself speaking Gaelic with her fellow workmates who came from Lewis or other Gaelic-speaking areas, although

464 on the island she had spoken English in school and had
197 not given much thought to which language she was speaking.
186 "I suppose it was because the other girls couldn't under-
571 stand us. They always used to mimic us, making noises
like they were talking it. It was nice to be able to
talk about things and not have anyone else understand,
especially when they teased us so much."

197 But on the island itself, the number of persons
178 speaking Gaelic is declining; and the scope of the language,
[192] i.e., the range of situations to which it applies (as
reflected in the diversity of vocabulary used), is becoming
[196] more restricted. A psychological experiment in which the
[191] semantic differential was used to study the organization
of English and Gaelic vocabulary in the cognitive processes
of Gaelic speakers suggests that Gaelic speakers are not
bilingual but monolingual in particular situations (Macleod
197 1966). Gaelic is the language of hearth, home, family and
191 community. English is the language of education, the
business world, and various transactions with the larger
197 society. Most Gaelic speakers spoke only Gaelic when they
871 entered school, but were required to speak only English in
191 the classroom. One islander recalls, "The first English
[876] words you learned were 'Sit' and 'Stand.' Those were the
days you got strapped if you spoke any Gaelic." Children
000 were addressed by their full English names. One of the

197 One of the
793 richest sources of Gaelic vocabulary now available is
779 the Gaelic Bible, but many villagers, especially the younger ones, complain that they are unable to understand many of the Gaelic words used by the minister in his sermons.

197 Although provision for teaching Gaelic in the schools
871 was made in the Education Act of 1918, only within the last ten years have schools incorporated classes in which Gaelic is taught at both primary and secondary levels. Gaelic is taught as a foreign language like French or Latin, rather than used as a medium of instruction, which would require a much larger vocabulary than most teachers possess.
[875] The present schoolmaster in Shawbost differs from past
[551] schoolmasters in that he addresses the children by their Gaelic names,[2] and devises projects intended to encourage a sense of pride in "Celtic culture."

873 The Department of Celtic Studies at the University of
197 Glasgow, which includes in its staff a Lewis poet and
185 several Scottish Nationalists, is described as "progressive." According to an islander who is a student in the Department, "They believe that if Gaelic is to survive as a language, it must be written as it is spoken. At school we were taught to write 'proper' Gaelic, Gaelic that's considered

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[2] Persons who come from Gaelic-speaking areas are addressed and referred to by Gaelicized names, such as "Murchadh" rather than "Murdo," and usually these names take the form of patronymics, which may or may not include nicknames (for example, Iain Dhomhnuill Bhain, i.e., John the son of fair Donald).

873 197 185 old-fashioned if you were speaking it. I wrote like that in my first few papers, and my professor stroked through words and asked, 'Would you say that?' We can even put in an English word now and then."

197 185 One result of this restriction in the scope of experience in which Gaelic is used, and of the treatment of Gaelic by government bodies and voluntary associations as a rare zoo animal that must be preserved rather than allowed to change, is a decline in written creative 197 536 expression in Gaelic. There are perhaps three major writers of Gaelic plays in Scotland, whose major battle is to be considered serious writers rather than colorful freaks or queer saints out to redeem Gaelic culture. "Once you become self-conscious about the language you speak," says one writer, "the language is dead." It has then become an artificial showpiece, a museum relic instead of a living, changing, flexible human tool. 197 186 [571] Outside the village the maintenance of the Gaelic language and other customs identified with "Celtic culture" occurs mainly as a result of interaction between "Gaels" and "Galls" (a Gaelic word meaning outsider or foreigner), as Gaelic speakers become self-conscious of their distinctiveness and either abandon their heritage (for example, MacIver 1968) or invest in it.

197 Within the village there are no branches of An Comunn
178 Gaidhealach and few books written in Gaelic. Once a rural
166 family moves to Stornoway, children often refuse to speak
191 Gaelic, even though they understand it, and parents tend
to speak only English to their children, believing this
will help them "get on." In the next generation, the
[871] language is lost. Village children attending school in
Stornoway often prefer talking to their Gaelic-speaking
[867] roommates in English. A young island woman, married and
living in Edinburgh, says she would like her baby son
to learn Gaelic but feels that if he had a mixture of the
two languages the other children would laugh at him.

197 English is the language of the larger society, the
191 language spoken in school and the language required in
197 most jobs and in dealing with most officials. In Gaelic-
191 speaking areas, the speaking of English connotes high
554 status. If an English speaker mispronounces Gaelic words,
626 he is quickly forgiven, praised for trying to learn such
578 a difficult language, and asked why he bothers with a
language that "isn't any use anyway." But if a Gaelic
speaker makes mistakes in English, he is teased mercilessly.
[551] Many nicknames derive from such mistakes; for example,
"Peter Squeak" got his name by mispronouncing the word
[524] "picturesque." People "win points" by competing with
each other in speaking English. "See how good you are in

197 English, no Gaelic allowed. I can beat you any time...."
191 One person observed, "People here make fun of each other
554 all the time. They're always trying to be superior, to
626 get one over the other person. Speaking English gives
578 you a feeling of superiority."
[524]

If a Gaelic speaker chooses to speak English in a village situation where there are no officials present or other cues which make English-speaking appropriate, this indicates that he considers himself a cut above everyone else. "I went to help Calum pull his tractor out of the mud, and Malina was there with her husband. She was speaking English. Oh, I says to myself, lady, you're not for this place. You don't belong to this village."

In evaluating whether or not a particular woman is "snobbish," villagers may decide, "She must be; whenever I've seen her in the post office, she never speaks any Gaelic."

197 The sanctions against speaking English when all
191 persons present speak Gaelic indicate the effect of inter-
554 action between a socially marginal group and the dominant
571 group. The effect is to increase the emphasis on uniform
184 behavior within the marginal group. The existence of a
578 higher social stratum has diminished social differentiation
within the village setting. Individuals may move out of that setting and adopt the language and other forms of

197 behavior characteristic of the dominant group; but for
191
554 those that remain in the village, the language serves a
571 unifying function, although its form is limited in
184
578 diversity of elements.

184 Jokes are most humorous when told in Gaelic; and
197 conversation is punctuated with Gaelic proverbs and old
538 stories. There is a vast oral lore, expressed in Gaelic,
[522] of the village and generations of its members and their
[521] characteristics and escapades, a dense map of human events.
All of these tales, proverbs and jokes have been told a
829 thousand times, but retain their unifying function. When
speaking of today's children who do not go to the sheiling,
a man says sadly, "They won't have our memories; this
place will mean less to them than it does to us." The
moor is not an empty wasteland, but a map of memories.
103 Thousands of place names are known, and behind every place
175 name is a story. The major landmarks such as mountains,
lochs and headlands tend to have Norse names, from the
days when the Norsemen raided and settled along the island
coasts; but the smaller hillocks and fields and bends in
the stream have Gaelic names, for example, Sheiling of
the One Night, Field of the Slaves, Slope of the Stone
[184] Boys, Hillock of William's Sheiling. To know these place
names and their histories is to participate in a distinct
community, which has been made even more distinct by contrast
with the dominant society.

166 **2. The Exiles:** An important source which supplies
this sense of contrast is the large number of persons
settled away from the island, often in "ghettoes" or
neighborhoods in cities in which village ties are
[521] maintained. It is said that gossip about Shawbost travels
more quickly in the district called Partick Hill in
166 Glasgow than it does within Shawbost itself. It may be
621 argued that the "exiles," with their Lewis and Harris
Societies and pilgrimages back to the village during
the holidays, do a great deal to sustain the strong
boundedness of the village as a sociocultural system.
They and non-Gaelic-speaking outsiders (the Eminent
Person writing his inevitable book in the romantic
solitude of an isolated manse) help to maintain a feeling
of worthwhileness in a place rife with feelings of
ambivalence and negative comparison with the larger society.

181 Within the village, especially during the long, dark
621 winter, complaints are often heard of the "sameness" of
[195] things. A common phrase, almost a greeting, is,
"Anything fresh?"--implying that the usual mode of
existence is stale, sour, exhausted, and mucky with
621 overuse. Although the villagers have access to the
20 range of information available to all Britishers through
829 forms of mass media such as newspapers, radios and
television sets, very little of this information is considered
relevant to village life, and thus is not attended to.

000 relevant to village life, and thus is not attended to.
517 Comedies, soap operas and westerns constitute the
[207] favorite television programs. Many of the men read
[538] adventure stories—war, western and detective—on the
[204] quiet Sunday afternoons. Magazines and newspapers
most often received include The Daily Express, The Sunday
Mirror, The People's Journal, The Stornoway Gazette,
The Oban Times, and True Romance, documents dealing with
local events or with scandal and dramatic personal
521 accounts. In general, the news of the mass media to
181 which this audience attends is gossip writ large. Such
news, like local gossip, is discussed endlessly, in
elaborate detail, until sapped of all potential to excite
or until new events capture the attention of the village
audience.

517 Events which occur in the open, treeless countryside
181 are vivid and dramatic. The generally low level of
stimulation enhances their dramatic effect. A man appears
on the hillside or a car along the horizon, and all ears
and eyes attend. The British system of perennial number
plates on cars makes it easy to identify the shifting
cast of characters even at night. Even children memorize
long lists of number plates. There is a perpetual audience
looking for a play.

183 The generally low level of stimulation derives in
181 part from values which restrict opportunities for self-expression.
[521) People are ready to gossip, i.e., to participate
vicariously in the escapades of others, but are less
[626) eager to act. Stories concerning mad-cap adventures of
some villagers do not belie the existence of constraints
[166) imposed on expressiveness. One of the major reasons
given by young villagers for wanting to leave the island,
and by emigrants for why they left, is that, "There is
nothing to do. The place is dead."

156 In the everyday life of the village, a style of
181 indirectness and restricted communication is encouraged.
183 A man might be praised in an obituary by the phrase, "His
621 voice was never heard in the community." The encouragement
of a "low profile" of behavior is characteristic of
communities in which people meet each other frequently
and know they will continue to meet and ask things of
each other for a long time to come. Indirectness avoids
conflict arising from divergent expectations, and embarrassment
from changes in plans.

155 A major feature of practices of child-rearing on
861 the island is inconsistency, which develops a style of
guarded watchfulness and hesitance to act or express
oneself. Children are teased by being offered things
which are then snatched away. Punishment is inconsistent.

155 861 577 [693] Lies are frequently told. "Every other sentence my father says is a lie. If you believe half of what he says, you're a fool. If you believe a quarter of what he says, you're getting near the truth. If you believe an eighth of what he says, it's probably the wrong eighth."

156 621 Villagers engage with each other in constant, quiet game-playing. They are dependent on each other for many things, but try to minimize the control that others have over them while improving their own positions. If someone brings plants or shrubs as a gift, the response is likely to be, "She was probably pruning her garden and needed to get rid of the leftover garbage." Such negativism releases the person from feeling obligated. (See Emmett 1964: 16-17, for a description of a similar situation in Wales.) A man who is asked about his new tractor replies, "Its faults will come out later." If he were to say it was all right and then it broke down, he would have lost points. In discussing the mental health of a villager recently returned from Craig Dunain (a mental hospital near Inverness), someone observed, "He's better than the doctor who let him out." If another breakdown were to occur soon, someone would be sure to comment, "And so-and-so said he looked all right."

156 572 Such training allows little room for the development of close friendships in which the individuals involved are

156 572 [522] sympathetic with each others' idiosyncrasies. A constant joking keeps people at arm's length and discourages the development of empathy.

156 154 Accompanying this style of indirect, inhibited expressiveness and the low level of stimulation are culturally prescribed opportunities for relatively uninhibited expressiveness. Such opportunities include the ceilidh ("visit"), the drinking situation (mainly for men), the role of clown or "character," and holidays [166] [484] [181] such as New Year's. Although young villagers and emigrants often describe the village as "dull" and "dead," the emigrants are happy enough to return to the island for short periods of time, during which they participate in those situations in which expressiveness and limited license are accepted.

156 154 574 3. Ceilidh, Clown, and New Year's Festivities: Only on certain occasions is relatively spontaneous and uninhibited expressiveness condoned or encouraged within the township, and even then the form which this expressiveness takes is fairly narrowly circumscribed. The traditional [178] [517] [538] [533] ceilidh was such an occasion. In the past, people gathered regularly at night in the tigh ceilidh (the ceilidh house, or home of someone in which a genial atmosphere existed; the tigh ceilidh was often the home of someone who lived alone), where stories were endlessly repeated and elaborated,

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154
574 genealogies told, and old songs were sung or new ones
178 composed. The concentration of expressiveness in these
[517]
[538] forms resulted in a well-developed, oral repertoire of
[533] literature and music.

The ceilidh still exists today in the form of less
[538] regular gatherings. Stories and genealogies are seldom
[533] recited, but songs are still sung. A few new songs are
being composed. The word ceilidh is used as both a noun and a verb to mean "a visit" or "to visit," but implies a casual, relaxed atmosphere rather than a formal visit. A formal visit is made by relatives living in Stornoway, government officials or businessmen, and is characterized by more constrained behavior.

156 The ceilidh of today is often accompanied by the
154 drinking of beer or whiskey, but a distinction may be
574 made between a gathering which includes both males and
273
178 females, and a drinking situation at which only males are
present. In the past, men often gathered in barns or weaving sheds to share beer made locally from barley or
273 brought from town in a large keg. The drinking of whiskey
[178] was reserved for special occasions, such as births, weddings,
[434] funerals, and the festivities surrounding the New Year, but
increased income has resulted in the consumption of whiskey on many other occasions. Heavy drinking is still an
[275] activity engaged in largely by males, and occurs in extra-village locations such as hotels and bothans (see Chapter 6).

273 village locations such as hotels and bothans (see Chapter
[154] 6). Drinking situations provide an important opportunity
for relatively uninhibited expression by males, and will
be discussed further in Chapter 6.

522 The role of clown or "character" is well developed
156 in Hebridean townships. In an environment which encourages
154 quietly watchful and somewhat anxious, conformist behavior,
the character is rude, raucous and outrageous, a bite of
fire in cold waters. He represents a reversal of normal
behavior. The villagers shake their heads, agree that he
is impossible, but encourage him to continue, urge him on
when he flags, and bring up his escapades for discussion
during moments of boredom. There are usually several such
characters in a village.

156 Reversal of low-profile and other "normal" behavior
154 is also allowed on particular occasions such as New Year's,
527 this time among all villagers. In the days of horses and
[522] carts, boys went around the village on New Year's night
[883] stealing carts and hiding them on the moor or down by the
[574] shore; today they steal gates. Between Christmas and
[431] New Year's, groups of boys visit houses in their neighborhood, collecting tea, sugar, biscuits, or money to be used
for a party in one of the houses. Such boys are called
796 balaich na bannagan, or boys of the bannag. In some
431 Gaelic-speaking areas, bannag refers to a gift that is
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796 given at Christmas; in Lewis, Christmas is identified
431 with Catholicism, and is an insignificant event in
184 comparison with New Year. To give two examples, a New
527 Year's dance is given, but not a Christmas dance; and
796 the mills continue working on Christmas if it occurs
184 on a week day, but close for at least two days at New Year's. In Shawbost, bannag is defined as a party associated with Hogmanay (New Year's eve).

527 In the recent past, until about ten years ago,
292 the boys dressed in women's clothes or wore masks. They
178 took turns wearing a cow's skin as they went from house to house. In each house, the boy wearing the skin was
[539] hit by the others as he chanted the rann na bannag (rhyme of the bannag):

> Here I come again renewing Christmas.
> (Or, in another version: This is the New Year's night.)
> I'll take the bread without the butter,
> And the butter without the bread,
> And the cheese by itself.
> Then we won't be empty-handed.
> One thing I refuse is a mangy potato.
> It gives a heavy feeling.
> It's not healthy.
> If you don't give me my bit of butter and my lump of cheese,
> Everything you possess will be gotten by the crows on St. Patrick's Day.

527 As the balaich na bannagan left the house in which
431 they had received gifts, they blessed it. All food and
178 money was given to the woman who prepared the bannag.

[788] Today children tend to receive money more often than food, and use some of the money to buy sweets at the post

527 office or general store, preferring to divide the rest
178 between themselves for use at a later time. A 50-year-
431 old woman observed, "They don't appreciate the bannag like we used to. They get this kind of rich food all
527 the time." The practices of wearing costumes and speaking
178 the rhyme are disappearing. Children used to have the bannag until they left school at age 14 or 15; now only the younger children go. "Children grow up more quickly today."

527 New Year's is celebrated perhaps most intensively
562 by the men, who after seeing the New Year in by watching
273 a special New Year's program on television go visiting
574 neighbors and relatives with bottles of whiskey. The
[184] custom of "first-footing" on New Year's eve is found throughout Scotland; but in the Hebrides such visiting and heavy drinking may last from New Year's eve until the following Sunday. During this time, the woman of the house, who usually refrains from drinking and to some extent controls the drinking done by the males in her house, relaxes her attitude, and may even participate. The comment, "It's only once a year," is often heard.
[589] During this time, the shyest and most retiring bachelor becomes a Romeo; this is the only time of year he may be heard to mention the word marriage. For example, one bachelor in his 60's chooses a "bride" each New Year, and takes her with him on his all-night visiting.

527 Whereas at other times of the year there are specific
273 times which are considered appropriate for visiting,
574 especially if the visit includes a bottle, at New Year's
visitors may appear in the middle of the night or at
[513] any time during the day. Some men may stay up for four
nights in a row, going back home for a few hours of sleep
522 or a bite to eat before setting off again. Various pranks
527 are played. Men climb through the windows of darkened
574 houses, or wake up sleepers by making animal sounds. One
man went around the village showing a pig's foot to women
as though it were a penis.

527 But whether lasting for one night or for five,
festivities end with the arrival of Sunday; and the usual
comment is, "Thank God it's Sunday."

166 The "exiles" prefer to return at such times as New
221 Year's, or during the summer months when the beaches are
484 inviting and the gales absent. They remember the
[527] "characters" and other features of village life which
give it color, often forgetting the drab background out
of which the color was forged. Some villagers whose
siblings have married and left the island continue to live
alone in the house mainly to keep the house in order for
their return. "I wouldn't close the house on them. They
come back every summer." A man thinking of emigrating

166 says, "I'll have to ask my brothers and sisters if they
221 mind, since they come back here every year." Some houses
484 which are almost empty for most of the year are overflowing during the summer months. Often the visitors must come in stages.

166 The "exiles" sing the old songs with vigor, drink
484 heavily during their visit, and praise the island for
528 that "special quality" which is unmatched by life in the
181 dirty, crowded, unfriendly city. Some plan to retire in the village. The villagers take up the tune that their society is eminently worthwhile. When talking to strangers, they ask questions pertaining to this image of themselves, such as, "Don't you think this place has something which you will never find in a city?" "People come here during the summer and they love it; they can't keep away. So they must find something here. What would you do in a city anyway? Out here you're freer."

166 The visitors not only bolster the self-esteem of the
484 islanders, but provide them with a fund of gossip. "You
528 summer visitors always turn things topsy turvy when you
521 come." Talk of the adventures of the summer visitors helps to occupy the long winter nights of the islanders.

166 A comment frequently heard is, "He was awfully home-
484 sick leaving." That is, he was already longing to be back
528 on the island, his spiritual home. The image of the island

166 The image of the island
484 as spiritual home is fostered by The Stornoway Gazette,
823 and by nostalgic songs, most of which were written by
204 islanders who emigrated to Canada in the first quarter
[533] of the century.

632 The crofting township as a strongly bounded network
241 continues to exist, although crofting as a socioeconomic
pattern which evolved in a situation of limited social
and geographical mobility, low cash reserves, and the
restriction of a large population to a region of limited
resources, is very different from crofting as defined by
an office in Inverness. As far as the crofter is concerned, to be defined as a crofter by the Crofters Commission
and other government agencies is to have access to
resources which affect the environment in which he makes
his choices.

241 The individual is faced with the semi-security of
288 crofting and weaving, in contrast with the exciting but
risk-laden opportunities offered by the dominant urban-
[654] industrial mainland. Crofting and Harris Tweed have been
protected by government legislation. Various subsidies
[745] and loans are available. In times of unemployment, social
security is available. Extremely important as contributers
621 to boundedness are the non-economic incentives: the
156 individual has a place in a human community; he is given

621 character traits just by virtue of his belonging to a
156 particular family; he is protected from the "out"
world even though he may have broken its rules. The
[527] village provides a colorful arena of recreation in the
[574] form of ceilidh, the character, and holidays such as
New Year's.

781 A major system of order and meaning is provided by
794 religion, and by the opportunity to belong to a tightly-
[181] knit religious clique. Lewis is sometimes called Tir an
t-soisgeul, Land of the Scriptures, in contrast with
571 the decadent outer world. The male drinking fraternity
[273] constitutes a second important group. And for everyone
[521] there is the cinema of their neighbors' activities,
which are placed in a vast human calendar that includes
the behavior of many generations.

Chapter 6

THE BIBLE AND THE BOTTLE

571 794 273 Two of the most important networks in the village are the converted members of the Free Church, and the drinking fraternity of the males, especially the unmarried males who lack the obligations of married men, and who can therefore drink with greater freedom.

A. The Bottle

273 175 The word "whiskey" (or "whisky," as it is spelled in Scotland) is almost synonymous with "Scotland," despite the fact that the earliest reference to whiskey in that country appears only in the late 15th century. The word is derived from the Gaelic uisge beatha, "water of life," a translation from the Latin aqua vita.

Martin Martin (1716: 3) describes the types of liquor made from "corn" in the Outer Hebrides as Common Usquebaugh, Trestarig (three times distilled), and Usquebaugh-baugh (four times distilled). He states, "...two spoonfuls of this last Liquor is a sufficient Dose; and if any Man exceed this, it would presently stop his Breath and endanger his life."

273 Excise taxes were first levied on whiskey in 1814,
175 and stills of less than 500-gallon capacity were prohibited.
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[656] Local, illegal distillation continued for a long time
after 1814, and throughout the Highlands and Islands
tales are told of "the excise man" and how he was outwitted.
273 The Island of Pabbay in the Sound of Harris was evacuated
175 in 1843, supposedly because of illegal distillation that
[166] was being carried on there. The ruins of old distilling
houses are found throughout Shawbost. Villagers say
that these were used in the time of their grandfather
or great-grandfather to distill whiskey for occasions
such as weddings.

[527] In Shawbost, until recent times whiskey was associated
mainly with special ceremonial occasions: the birth of
[846] a child, weddings, and wakes. When a baby was born, the
father went into town for whiskey to be given to visitors
764 coming to see the baby. Having whiskey at a funeral was
273 so important that many a widow sold her cow to provide
it, so that people would not say it was a bad funeral.
A custom of sitting up all night in the house of the
deceased has stopped, probably in part because a prayer
meeting lasting from midnight until 2 a.m. was introduced
with the intention, according to one minister, of preventing
273 the wake from becoming too joyful an occasion. Whiskey
175 was abundant at New Year's, and at weddings. "The dance
[527]
[585]

273 [at a wedding] would be held in the barn, with sheets
175 lining the walls so that if a man staggered against the
585 wall he wouldn't dirty himself. There were four and one-half gallons jugs of beer and a few bottles of whiskey. Sometimes someone would spew on the floor. People got drunk on very little, because they didn't have it so often."

273 Occasionally the word went out that someone had
175 brought a jug of beer from town, and the men gathered in someone's barn or weaving shed, usually on a Saturday night.

273 "The war changed that. When you were at sea, you
175 lived from day to day. There was no tomorrow." "When
829 my brother was away at sea, most of the money he earned was saved for him, and when he got back we gave it to him to do whatever he liked with it. The men would go off to town drinking. They had money, and they had nothing else to do; and they had learned to drink during the war. Maybe if the TV had been around then they wouldn't have started that kind of drinking."

175 1. Bothans: Because most parishes in Lewis were
275 "dry," that is, no licensed purveyors were allowed, a
273 journey of many miles had to be made to purchase beer and
[671] whiskey in Stornoway. Around 1930, Nessmen (many of whom were sailors) began to bring back from town several kegs

175 of beer at one time to avoid having to make the 50-mile
275 round trip very often. Men met to drink in barns or in
273 tigh ceilidh, the houses in which people gathered for
evening visiting, but for this purpose eventually built
huts of stone or concrete, or used shelters already
available such as the shells of old buses or Nissen huts
built by the armed forces but no longer used by them.
[361] These shelters, separate from the rest of the village,
were called bothans. One or a few men brought the drink
275 from town, and the drinks were sold at cost. In 1963
273 a bothan was raided by the police and the men fined.
625 But in 1967, a court case found six men not guilty of
681 trafficking in exciseable liquor because there was no
evidence that money had changed hands. The lawyer for
the accused men argued that the drink was not "for sale."
It was simply available, and drinkers made "voluntary"
contributions to a common kitty.

175 The first bothan in Shawbost was started after the
273 second world war, by a sailor home on leave. Liquor was
275 brought to an old Nissen hut, which eventually was replaced
by a small concrete hut with gas lighting. ("It was
built overnight, because if anyone knew it was being built,
they would protest." "It was built inside the Nissen hut
so no one would know. On the day they were tearing down
the Nissen hut, a minister was passing by and he praised

273 275 [175] the Lord that his prayers had been answered.") Another bothan was started in an old bus.

Today only one bothan exists in Shawbost. It is a [354] small concrete structure, lit by gas and heated with coal, which is burned in an expensive fireplace. Like most bothans, the one entrance faces away from the main road. Unlike most bothans, it has a small window which is curtained but nevertheless reveals whether or not the light is on inside. Most bothans present blank, windowless and doorless faces that give no indication whether or not the building is occupied.

[208] Every three years a poll may be taken within a parish to determine whether the parish should be wet or dry. [666] After the parish of Uig voted itself "wet," the Doune Braes Hotel was opened in Carloway, only five miles from Shawbost. [829] One of the arguments for making the parish "wet" was that drinking at the bothans would cease, and men would drink under more controlled circumstances. "The married men usually went home from the bothan at a reasonable hour, but the single men just stayed there talking all night. At the hotel, they have to go home at 10:00."

Despite the opening of the hotel so close to Shawbost, the bothan remained open. The drink was cheaper and the atmosphere less formal. Unlike the bothans in Ness, however, [991] the Shawbost bothan was usually open only on Saturday, the

273 one night of the week in which controls are imposed, by
275 the arrival of Sunday when no one is supposed to drink.
[771] The bothan was occasionally open on Friday night, and
on Monday night. ("If there's anything left from Saturday
[221] night, we finish it on Monday.") During the summer of
1971 when the days were long and filled with communal
township activities such as peat-cutting, the bothan was
open every night of the week. The bothan closed when the
man supplying it with drink suddenly died, and has not
reopened.

273 2. Functions of Drinking: If a man decides not to
571 participate in drinking, he is not praised for his self-
156 control or his ability to abstain; rather, people say,
"What's the matter with him that he doesn't mix?" A man
goes off to the hotel or to a bothan "for a wee nip" or
"for a pint" (the pint of beer which serves as a chaser
for glasses of straight whiskey). Both phrases are
euphemisms for the huge amount of whiskey and beer which
must be consumed if a man is to satisfy the canons of
social intercourse which obtain. A man can drink alone
or, in the company of others, drink very little only at
great social cost.

"You can't go in for a casual pint in a place like the bothan because it's a place where people mix, and you're bound to meet old friends you haven't seen for

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156 a while. It would be an insult not to take a drink with
[576] them; you musn't miss your round."

273 The usual practice when drinking with friends is
571 for one person to buy the drinks; everyone drinks
156 together, and then someone else buys the next round. To
431 drink slowly is to indicate that you intend to miss your
round. A relative who returns to the island for a holiday
usually pays for more rounds than he receives, and may
spend as much as L80 in a single week.

If a man wants more drink than his fellows, he has several choices. He may step up the pace of drinking by buying more rounds, which means that he is likely to pay a larger share than the others during the evening as they will be ready to quit before he is; or he may keep a bottle hidden outside the room, and disappear periodically for a private nip, after which he returns to the group.

273 As incomes have grown, excessive drinking, which was
571 once confined to a small number of occasions, has also
156 increased. In the days when money was scarce, people shared
178 with others what they had. Elaborate and relatively lavish
434 ceremonies in which all community members participated
were possible because of the contribution in labor and goods
of members of the community. The custom prevailing today is
to use the added money not to purchase more goods and services,
to travel, or in other ways that might result in both social

273 differentiation and differentiation in personal experience,
571 but to use it in the community, as social coin. The few
156 men who refuse to get involved in drinking episodes that
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434 would deplete their available funds are called "mean"
and "tight-fisted."

"If I had a wish, I'd choose to live the same life all over again, maybe a wee bit rougher. We don't get a chance here. The poverty keeps us down. But what does it matter to be a schoolteacher or a minister? What good does it do you? If I have a shilling in my pocket, I've got to spend it. I remember ten years ago, I went into town with L60 in tweed payments to buy a new stove. I met some of my
[435] pals, so I put L20 down on a L50 stove and spent the rest.
What a time we had."

[484] "I went for a holiday on the mainland and came back with money in my pocket because it's no use drinking in a place where you don't know people. You want a yarn."

273 Drinking occurs at night behind the gray, concrete
571 shield of the bothan or in hotels. Drinking situations
156 provide opportunities, rare in the repressive arena of the
154 village, to express emotions and ideas. These expressions
can always be retracted in the cold, sober light of day.

"I used to be an alcoholic. Now I spend most of my weekends feeding my brother lager so he won't get the DT's. When something good happens, I wish like hell I could get

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[following P. 158]

273
571 out and celebrate. There's no other way to express
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154 myself."

"Now that Ruaridh has stopped drinking, he's not very interesting to talk to. He's very dull these days. He doesn't say a thing."

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796 During the Communions, a sense of excitement and holiday permeates the village. Among the converted members of the Free Church, this feeling is expressed in vigorous participation in long church services and meetings in the homes of the converted. In the rest of the village, the unconverted men don their best suits and head for the hotel, or the bothan opens earlier in the week than usual. All special occasions such as fank days or the arrival of relatives generate excitement, which is most often expressed, among the unconverted men, by drinking.

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[584] A man may propose to a woman, and the next day "forget" this rash action with impunity. When a man has been drinking, he is more likely than on other occasions to be openly affectionate to a woman, or to express strong feelings of friendship to his fellows. "It's the only time when you're really happy. You can sing, tell your life story. It's the only time when people are really friendly. But it's a false friendship, because when you meet someone the next day, he's not the same person. He's distant, cold. You feel depressed. You want to recreate the situation, so you start drinking again."

781 **3. Bible vs. Bottle:** An islander living on the
273 795 mainland once observed that the Free Church plays cat
794 and mouse with members of the community who drink heavily.
[761] Death is a common event in a community which has a large
number of old people, and the theme of death appears
repeatedly in sermons and in the conversations of those
who have undergone religious conversion. The temporary
pleasures of drink are contrasted with the eternal joys
781 awaiting those who have been saved. The "false" friend-
794 ships of the drinking situations are contrasted with the
more lasting, consistent relations which characterize the
clique of the converted. "You have lots of friends when
you get converted, and they don't change overnight the
way your drinking companions do."

273 "With the drink it's easy to get started and just not
[434] be able to stop drinking, especially with the money there
[781] is now. Everything's unsteady here except religion."

273 Many of the most deeply religious male members of
794 the church were once heavy drinkers. One villager observed,
733 "If a man went to extremes as a sinner, he'll be just as
781 fanatical when he becomes holy. Had it not been for
[743] religion, some of them would have landed in Craig Dunain
[the mental hospital near Inverness]. The talk is forever
on religion. That keeps their mind at rest."

B. The Bible

771 1. The Free Church: "A man in my great-grandfather's
175 time," said a 65-year-old man, "talked about the great
178 change within his generation, from the days when fanks were held on Sundays to such strict observance on the Sabbath that not even a cow could be tethered."

175 The first evangelical minister on Lewis came to the
793 parish of Uig in 1824. The Rev. Alexander Macleod belonged
795 to the Church of Scotland, but joined the Free Church when it broke away from the Church of Scotland in the "Disruption" of 1843. When he came in 1824, he found "superstition," "spiritual darkness," and "polluted remains of Popery, since it was the religion in this place...the only notion
795 they had of Christianity (Beaton 1925: 7-8)." The southern
829 isles of the Outer Hebrides are still Catholic, but in the
184 Protestant isles of the north, holidays associated with
798 Catholicism are avoided, and stories are still told of the burning of Protestant martyrs by Catholics. Catholics are disliked "because they believe that they can buy their way out of sin," or that the bread and wine of Communion is really the blood and body of Christ. "A Catholic is anointed with oil and left to die without food or water. We are privileged that we are not like them."

175 In the Disruption of 1843, about one-third of the
795 people and 39% of the ministers left the established church

175 to join the Free Church (Donaldson 1960: 100). The Free
795 Presbyterians left the Free Church in 1893 because they
found it too "liberal." Several dissenting groups,
including most of the members of the Free Church, formed
a United Free Church at the turn of the century. After
[659] a long court case, the church property was left with the
Free Church, which continues to support itself without aid
795 from the state. Collections and funds solicited by
794 villagers who visit the households periodically are sent
465 to a central office in Edinburgh, which pays all ministers
an equal salary, despite variations in the size of their
congregations. About one-fourth of the church's income
comes from Lewis. A minister's salary is between L950-
1,000, and the upkeep and fueling of his manse is included.
The present minister in Shawbost uses oil and coal, but at
an earlier time received loads of peat from the villagers.
The villagers bring extra food to the manse when Communions
are held, although the church donates about L20 to be used
to provide for visiting ministers.

795 The Free Church contains a number of presbyteries,
of which Lewis and Harris are one. An Assembly is held
each year which parallels the Assembly held by the Church
of Scotland. (According to one minister of the Free Church,
"A Berlin wall divides the two.") The Free Church publishes
a monthly report of church activities and amount of money

795 collected, and an annual report on morals, which usually condemns drinking and "the decline in moral standards." Ministers are trained in a college in Edinburgh. Many [197] are Gaelic speakers, although the number is said to be declining.

794 793 When a congregation loses a minister because of death or other reasons, it issues a "call" to some other minister. The congregation is familiar with the names and preaching styles of a number of ministers, who have in the past visited the community as guest speakers. The congregation votes for a minister from a list made by the lay officers of the church. The minister may or may not accept the call.

795 [178] The Free Church and the Free Presbyterian Church, two fundamentalist Protestant sects which have survived the tendencies toward unification evident since the turn of the century, are strongest in the Highlands and Islands. Shawbost contains a few people who belong to the Church of Scotland, but most villagers belong to the Free Church. 795 346 [173] The only church (in the sense of a building in which sermons are preached) is a Free Church which was built in 1883, supposedly after men from Shawbost helping to repair the fence at the minister's manse in Carloway, where they then attended church, were refused boiling water for their oatmeal "brose" by the minister's wife. A building in which members of the Church of Scotland worshipped was built

795 346 before 1883 but now serves as a school museum. When it closed, most of the members changed to the Free Church.

794 The present congregation includes many families from the neighboring village of Bragar, who come to church for the morning service and usually attend a prayer meeting in their own village in the evening. Once a month the minister gives an evening sermon in Bragar. The left side of the church, where most of the Bragar people sit, is called "the Bragar side."

Lay officers of the church, called elders and deacons, are elected by the communicants, those members of the congregation who have taken Communion. Both elders and deacons sit in special seats at the front of the church beneath the pulpit. Deacons, who are concerned with material matters such as collections and church property, sit in the "wee seats" slightly lower than the partitioned seats of the elders, the "big seats." The deacons meet in a deacons' court which the elders may attend. A meeting is held once a year at which the congregation is told matters such as how the church money was spent. Kirk sessions are limited to elders, who decide who will be baptised or take Communion.

[621] Each street or neighborhood within the village has its own deacon and elder, to whom members of the street bring various matters that concern church organization, such as plans for baptism.

794 **2. The Township as Religious Network:** The religious
621 sphere has two distinguishable social networks, one of
which coincides in personnel with the village network.
Most households within the village feel obligated to
"make an appearance" during at least one of the two
796 Sunday services. Most children are sent to Sunday school,
851 and all are baptised. In baptism, fathers stand with the
children, promise to raise them in the church, and to set
a good example for them. Baptism must precede Communion,
the ceremony by which a person becomes a full member of
the church. Baptism signifies membership in the community,
the village-qua-congregation. "Somehow you're not really
legal until you've been baptised." Some feel that the
child's soul may be endangered if he should die without
baptism, although this idea is discouraged by the church.
[779] According to the Calvinistic ideas of predestination, the
fate of one's soul has already been decided.

796 The pressure to have children baptised enables the
851 village-as-congregation to exert social control over deviant
626 individuals. If a child is conceived out of wedlock, the
848 parents of the child (if they have gotten married) or the
unwed mother alone must stand in front of the congregation
and be lectured by the minister before the child may be
baptised. A woman who has married a man known not to be
the father of her child must also stand by herself. A

796 miscarriage occurring before marriage also requires
851 standing even when the child to be baptised was conceived
626 by the couple after marriage. A married man who has
848 [837] impregnated a woman who is not his wife must undergo
this ordeal before he can have his own children baptised.

It is the responsibility of the entire community to ensure that this punishment is carried out. On one occasion, the minister forgot to lecture a couple, and afterwards sent them a note that they would not have to stand; but they insisted, afraid that people would say that they were getting special treatment.

[203] According to one minister, the manse is a kind of
[521] "research center" to which all gossip is reported. Some
[793] ministers use this information in the pulpit, chiding
[794] people and calling attention to wrong-doings in front of
the congregation. In contrast, a different attitude exists
[184] in parts of Stornoway, where villagers have approached
[759] doctors in the maternity ward for information regarding
miscarriages and premarital births only to be told that
this information is confidential. The ordeal of standing
[178] in church does not exist in Stornoway. In 1971 a person
in Shawbost was accidentally exempted from this ordeal
and his exemption was seen by some as providing an
opportunity to stop what is considered by many to be an
archaic custom.

871 Education in the local school has included a great
875 deal of religious instruction; in other words, religious
771 and educational spheres commingle. Because of the
[466] relative prestige which the teaching profession offers
to persons from the island, and because the islands are
considered "isolated" by most persons looking for jobs
(teaching posts on the island include an added sum
which is designated as "isolation payment"), most of
the island's teachers are themselves islanders. Education
[554] is one method by which one's position in the community is
elevated. The high status derived from having advanced
education also reflects favorably on the parents and position of the family. But teachers and others who return
to the island are expected not to deviate from island
norms in important matters, such as fundamentalist religious
beliefs; hence teachers tend to perpetuate fundamentalist
religious beliefs within the classroom.

871 Formerly the minister visited the school once each
771 year to examine the children on their catechism, thus
773 testing the state of religious instruction in the school.
178 Several years ago this practice was stopped by the education
authorities of the County Council, and the minister now
gives a sermon in the school about once a month but is
not allowed to examine the children. Many ministers are
dissatisfied with the arrangement, as they are afraid that

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771 the children might not receive proper religious
793 instruction.
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"Family worship" is considered an important part
771 of daily life. Prayers should be said before meals
782 and teas, and the head of the household should read
593 passages from the Bible to the assembled members of the household every morning and evening. The practice of
[178] "reading the books" prevails in households headed by
[592] older men, but is less common among families headed by younger men.

794 3. The Clique of the Converted: The second network
632 within the religious sphere is a special religious in-
621 group, the clique of the converted (curamach). This clique constitutes a relatively strongly bounded system which to some extent competes with the township boundary system. Owen (Rees 1960) has noted that as persons become more involved with religion in the Protestant Hebrides, they tend to remove themselves from community life.

Intense involvement with the church sometimes conflicts with township activities since people may attend Communions at times when a fank is planned, leaving the work to be done by others. When elders of the church are present at activities, such as fanks, which are otherwise usually boisterous and full of humor, behavior tends to be "properly" restrained.

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781 Membership in the religious clique offers many satisfactions. "You can talk with the converted all night, see them the next day and go on talking, because you're always talking about something new. Now, when
[829] you hear someone telling a yarn or joke, you say to yourself, I've heard that before, I don't want to hear it again. But when you're talking about Christ, sharing your experiences of conversion, the conversation is always new."

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829 A few cynical, non-converted persons describe the clique as a "social club" whose members sit together in church, shake hands with each other more often than with non-members, and are always having meetings in each others' houses from which others are excluded. "They came in and invited Jessie and Marian to come to their prayer meeting, but they didn't ask me. They have tea, sing psalms, and have religious discussions. Ministers and converted people from all over the island come to these meetings."

"I said to her, 'You wouldn't be caught dead talking to me. At the church you all shake hands with each other, but never with me. How about passing some of it on?'"

The non-converted often express envy, and say they wish they felt the same way that the converted people seem to feel. "I was sitting with my sister at the fire

794 one night, and she said, 'I've got something, have you?'
781 She told me, 'I've got Christ.' She said that Christ
829 whispered to her as we were sitting there, 'Come, come, come to me.' Now she's got full military honors. I felt so bad when she took Communion, because I hadn't got it. We're all going to die. Christ is everything. Without Christ you've got nothing. I go to bed at night and something is hanging over the bed saying, 'This isn't your bed, this isn't your place.' This is the last fling, you won't have me with you long. The next time you see me, I'll be in the church parade."

Often the converted are criticized for "dropping the old crowd" or for not fulfilling their neighborly obligations. "When these people need something, they're going to be hard put to find anyone eager to help them." "You're supposed to be good and loving when you're converted, but they never help anybody except themselves. They look down on anyone who's not converted."

When someone begins to come to the Wednesday night prayer meetings, the most noticeable sign of conversion, the newcomers are welcomed into the fold with eagerness; after the prayer meeting, members shake their hands and congratulate them. To be converted is to be "Born again." "My life is like a boat that was once tied to a pier with many ropes. One by one, these ropes have fallen away. There is only drudgery to this life. I feel as though I

794 could float right up to heaven. The only pleasure I get,
781 although it is but a shadow of that ultimate joy, is being
829 in the company of good-living people."

The converted often spend evenings with each other singing psalms and sharing experiences of conversion. They follow the Communions as they are given in different congregations throughout the island, and may even go to Communions on the mainland. "You get to meet all kinds of interesting people that you wouldn't meet otherwise. If it weren't for these meetings, it would be like the cities, you'd never meet." "East side knows west side because of the Communions, not because of the dances. You're alone at dances." Although every house in the village is open to visitors at Communion times, the converted tend to gather in the homes of their fellow converted, where, between the twice-daily services, they gather for intense religious discussion.

Persons who are converted, even if they have not taken Communion, attend the prayer meeting held in the middle of each week, but only the communicants may attend the "private meetings" (coinne uaigneach), which are held once a month. "My father used to tease my mother, who went to these 'darkness' meetings. But it's only a prayer meeting that gives the younger, recently converted members a chance to give the prayers, since when you're a communicant you're

794 called on an awful lot to give prayers in church, and it's
781 hard for some of them to get up and speak." The Reverend
829 Macleod notes in his diary that private meetings were
[175] initiated on the island in 1826.

A quarterly meeting (*coinne raith*) is held in Stornoway,
[796] to which many of the converted from the villages go. The
Communions are held twice a year. "Special services," or "small communions," held soon after the Communions, are intended as evangelical services for young people, that is, services enjoining people to convert. These services, which last from Monday through Friday, were started in Ness after the first world war.

796 *4. The Communions (Orduighean)*: Communions are given
794 twice a year, during autumn and late winter. They are
scheduled for different weeks in different parts of the island, and neighboring congregations close their churches when Communions are being held nearby, so that during the Communion season some persons may attend a number of services at different churches.

In the days when transportation was limited, visitors
796 coming from a distance away stayed for an entire weekend.
574 All households prepared food and made ready for any over-
794 night visitors who might arrive without prior warning.
178 Guests often slept on mattresses laid on the floor. After
484 facilities of transportation improved, it became common
for people to drive down for the day in private cars and return to their own homes at night.

000 return to their own homes at night. There is now less
796 need for the generalized hospitality of the past, which
794 829 was given to anyone who came to the door looking for food
671 and shelter. Through these visits some families in
574 different villages have, however, established relationships which are kept up by exchanging hospitality at times of Communion and also in other ways. A family in
[262] Ness may send to a friendly family in Shawbost some *guga*,
[251] goslings of solan geese which are captured by Nessmen on the island of Rona once a year and are salted to make a delicacy that is in great demand. Through such contacts a family wanting to purchase a cow may receive word of one that is being offered for sale in the village of a Communion contact.

796 Services of Communion last five days. All services except that held on Sunday evening are intended for the communicants or full members of the church, also called
[535] "the believers" and "good livers." During this time, no
[485] dances are held in Shawbost, and in Carloway the hotel is closed.

796 On Communion Sunday, the upper balcony of the church
794 is filled with villagers watching to see if any of the
829 recently converted have decided and have been allowed to take Communion. Because the villagers watch very closely the behavior of everyone else within the village, any change

796 794 829 in behavior is noticed long before the person takes Communion. Some persons may never take Communion, even though they are generally known as "good living."

A person who shows signs of being "good living" (converted) is carefully watched by all villagers, but especially by the clique of the converted whose strict standards he must satisfy before he is able to gain admission.

A communicant who gets drunk or in other ways falls from grace is not allowed to take Communion again until he goes before the kirk session and attests that his ways have been mended.

796 794 [782] Thursday, the first day of the Communions, is " a day of humiliation and prayer." Friday is Latha na Ceist, the day of questions or catechism, sometimes called "fellowship day" or "men's day." A passage is read from the Bible, which different elders must discuss in the light of their experiences of conversion. The day is also called a day of marks and signs. The elders who speak as a part of the day's rites are from congregations outside the village, which is regarded as "a matter of courtesy, and to bring in new ideas." They are called on by the minister and stand to give testimony or "fellowship," sharing their experiences of conversion with the assembly. These attestations are also spoken of as giving "tokens"

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[829]

which signify that they are believers and differentiate them from the non-believers. "Some people may think they're ready to take Communion, but listening to these people helps them to see if they really are. Often their daily actions give the lie to their intentions, and they realise this and decide to wait a while longer." The sermon is propitiatory and includes psalms on such subjects as "Blessed are they that see the light."

After this service, the minister announces that the kirk session is prepared to interview new persons who would like to take Communion. From Friday until Saturday night, individuals "give witness" before the session. After an individual has described his experiences of conversion and has been catechized, he leaves the room and his case is discussed. The elders bring up any items of behavior that would cast doubt on his testimony. Questions about his moral behavior might include, "Has he taken a drink lately? Has he been seen in a dance hall? Is his behavior sufficiently circumspect?" The person is then called back and told the decision of the session by the minister. Occasionally someone is rejected.

Saturday is the day of preparation, the day on which those planning to take Communion are called upon to look at themselves carefully, inspect their faith, and prepare themselves to go to the Lord's table. After the morning

796 service, believers remain in the church where they
794 receive tokens given to them by the elder of their street.
These are pieces of metal on which is printed the name
of the church and village, and a verse from Corinthians,
"Do this in remembrance of me." Communicants planning
to take Communion in other villages take with them tokens
which they have received from their own minister, or ask
the local minister for one.

The Communion Services begin on Sunday morning at
about 11:30. Persons not taking Communion sit in the
back of the church or in the balcony. Communicants give
their tokens to the elders who stand in the aisles, and
are allowed to sit in seats in the front section of the
church, which are marked off from the other seats by white
tablecloths. The service lasts for three to four hours.
Many communicants also spend a half hour to an hour in
informal prayer before the ministers arrive to begin the
[178] service. In the past, a prayer meeting was also held at
[184] 8:00 in the morning, a custom still practiced in some
places, such as the island of Scalpay.

Sunday is the only day of Communion on which standardized selections of Biblical verses are spoken and psalms are sung. On other days the ministers are allowed wide variation in the contents of their services. On Sunday, Psalm 22 is followed by the reading of Isaiah 53, and

796 and then by Psalm 69, all of which emphasize the suffering
794 of Christ. The sermon which follows may be based on any
text; its intent is to strengthen the believers. It is
followed by Psalm 118. The minister then announces that
the most sacred part of the day's service will follow,
the "fencing of the table" (*cuir garadh mu'n a Bhord*).
He reads from Galatians V, in which those of the flesh
[829] are separated from those of the spirit. Those who wish
to take Communion are exhorted to leave everything behind,
including husbands, wives, parents and children who are
non-believers, if they wish to partake of the fruits of the
spirit. One man is said to have become converted when he
saw his wife going to take Communion for the first time.

Psalm 103, a psalm of blessing, is then sung. Until five years ago, communicants sat with the rest of the congregation and rose to "come to the table" (those seats marked off by white tablecloths or sheets) for different "sittings," as the congregation sang the psalms of blessing.

The minister then asks the elders to bring in "the elements" of wine and bread. The wine is carried in silver pitchers (which are refilled from bottles kept in a trunk beside the pulpit by an elder who turns his back to the congregation while doing this task), and poured into silver wine goblets which are passed down the rows of communicants along with plates filled with bread cut

796 794 into tiny squares. The ministers and the elders partake first. A final hymn is full of rejoicing, and the minister then exhorts the communicants to return to the world and give witness and to live exemplary lives.

The evening service on Sunday is evangelical, intended for non-believers. After this service the communicants conduct a brief prayer meeting to give thanks.

[829] On Monday, the minister again tells the communicants to go out into the world and declare publically their experiences of the preceding day; and to demonstrate in everything they do and say that they are believers. In [178] [484] the past, only a morning service was given, as most people had a long journey ahead of them to return home; but now that cars are available,a similar evening service is also conducted.

781 794 796 [561] [562] 5. The Process of Conversion: The process of conversion may be slow or sudden, but conversion is most common at middle age and among women. One informant wryly observed, "Only recently women were allowed to have souls. But from the looks of the Communion table, mostly women are [589] [822] going to heaven." Many of the women taking Communion are dressed from head to foot in black, a color which indicates their widowed status.

781 794 The first sign that a person is "following" (leanntail) the church is that he begins to attend the weekly prayer

781 794 [302] meetings. If a woman converts when she is off the island, as occasionally happens during the first year or so at university or other school, the tell-tale sign is that she begins to let her hair grow, and wears it tied back in a bun.

The word curam means "conversion," but is also used in ordinary conversation to mean being careful, such as keeping one's clothes tidy. It also means to be circumspect. In a religious context, it means to be careful of one's behavior, as this behavior reflects on the state of one's soul. When a person "has the curam," he has demonstrated that he is "in a state of conviction," that he
781 has undergone conversion. People say, "A change has
794 come into my life." The "change" includes the cessation
795 of drinking and going to dances and concerts. Woman stop smoking. "After you are converted, you don't watch TV on Sunday. You should do everything for Sunday on Saturday, like shine your shoes for church or cook the Sunday dinner."

781 A dramatic change in behavior is often found among
273 men who have had a history of hard drinking. One man went into the bothan, raised a glass to his lips, but never drank. "He put it down and walked out. They put the glass of whiskey aside, expecting him to return. He was a hard-working man, one of the hardest workers in the village, but everything went to booze in the bothan. He slept in

781 273 the same room as his father. His father used to lecture him, but he closed his ears. Then his father died. The week after he walked out of the bothan, a relative sent him some money. He had been trying to buy a suit on installment, but always spent the money on drink. He went into town, got the suit, and wore it to church the next Sunday."

781 153 The process of conversion is often accompanied by feelings of restlessness, inability to sleep, scriptural passages running through one's mind, alienation from normal surroundings ("A voice kept whispering, 'this is not your home'"), and occasionally visions, all of which events serve as signs to the person that he is indeed converted,
[869] one of the few chosen by God for salvation. As children are taught from an early age in both school and Sunday school to memorize Biblical passages, it is not surprising that such passages often come to mind easily, and, during a stressful, disorderly time of life may be interpreted as messages from God which promise order and relief. Evangelical services are full of doom, the imminent possibility of unexpected death, and exhortations to convert. Conversion is often traced to a minister's preaching.

"I was like an animal. I didn't care whether God existed. Then my wife died. It was when I saw the coffin that something happened inside. I was converted six months later."

781 153 "It was the Monday after the Communions, about midnight. I was lying in bed not thinking about anything in particular. Then all of a sudden I felt God speaking to me. It was the strangest feeling, like I didn't feel safe. With each tick of the clock, time was running out, the world was rushing to its end.

"Four days I was like that, dazed and uncertain, not feeling safe. I was sitting down, unable to work. I didn't know what I was doing most of the time. Then all of a sudden I had a vision, of Christ on the cross who died for us. I had been praying to God and here was my answer, trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. God does everything for you. He makes you breathe, lifts your lungs in and out, makes your blood flow. Everything is in the Bible, every event in 1970. Once I realized that, I could take the days as they came, from one day to the next. We came bare into this world, and we leave it bare; but I'm certain of one thing, that we go with Jesus into heaven after death, and no one can talk me out of that."

781 571 Although conversion is supposedly an individual matter, and one's fate is thought to be pre-determined, conversion often occurs among many persons at the same time. "It's like a chain of fireworks. Once one person goes, the rest go, too." Through the dense network of social contacts that criss-crosses the island, villagers are aware of

781 conversions that take place in other villages. "Five
571 persons converted recently in Lochs. Two used to drink
a lot, they're saying." Sometimes mass conversions occur,
[986] called "revivals," during which people shout, chant,
speak in tongues, and sometimes collapse.

794 Although strict observance of religious practices
829 must be maintained by the converted while they are on the
island, it is possible for them to relax this observance
when they visit mainland cities. The converted see nothing
wrong with attending plays or movies in Glasgow, as long
as no one observes them. A non-believer once commented
wrly, "They believe in the 11th commandment: thou shallt
not be seen." Women who have spent many years in domestic
service on the mainland, where they generally live very
different sorts of lives from those of island people, often
return to the island to retire. They then take up the
[292] color of their surroundings. The long black dress then
becomes the appropriate garb for them on Sundays. As one
person observed, "Women deposit their curam in the Left
Luggage Department at Stornoway, and pick it up fifty years
later."

779 The beliefs of the Free Church include explanations
for all events. "Everything of importance that happened
in history is recorded in the Bible." Predestination lies
behind all unexpected events; a sense of fatalism dulls

779 the impact of all disappointment. The church offers meaning and order to those encountering problems posed by village life. Of great importance is the sense of certainty, power and righteousness which membership in the church provides in contrast with feelings of inferior-
779 ity vis-à-vis the "superior" mainland. This is the Land
829 of the Scriptures; even the Free Church on the mainland is considered decadent. "Religion isn't kept on the mainland. The cities are full of sin. Lewis is given mostly to religion. It should be called the Holy Isle."

Chapter 7

Conclusions:

Summary and Theoretical Considerations

A. Summary

105 Crofting townships of the Highlands and Islands of
[131] [484] Scotland are within a few hours' travel of the major cities
of Britain. An extremely high percentage of the young
[873] people in the crofting counties attend universities and
other institutions of higher education. Politically,
[641] administratively, economically and in other ways, the
crofting population participates in the larger urban-industrial society of Britain.

105 Despite this participation, the township-qua-village-
632 community is a relatively strongly bounded system. This
621 thesis investigates factors contributing to the strong
[121] boundedness. From a relatively self-sufficient economic
105 178 unit using agricultural practices suited to the extensive
632 cultivation of marginal land by smallholders, the township
241 has during recent decades changed to one dependent on
goods and services provided by the larger society.
105 Crofting activities nevertheless persist, in part because
241 of the incentives offered by government bodies such as the
654 Crofters Commission and the Department of Agriculture. The

The
105 241 fact that crofting townships are located on marginal
654 land is one reason that the larger society is not motivated
[311] to exploit the land. The Crofters Holding Act of 1886
[671] and subsequent legislation ensured protection of and
incentives for continued maintenance of crofting and
the crofting township.

Protective government legislation, grants and loans
for housing, subsidies for rearing livestock, relatively
low taxes, and the economic protection provided by a
socialistic government in times of crisis have helped to
maintain a core of crofting families for many generations.
105 The predominance of older persons in the township is
162 632 striking, but many of the younger people who have left
166 the island to work on the mainland return frequently,
434 584 contribute part of their salary to the remaining family
members, and plan eventually to marry and settle down in
the village or to retire there. Long-term residence of
[621] kin-linked families in a small area has in itself contributed
to the boundedness of the township network.

105 The policy of the government, through developmental
241 agencies such as the Highlands and Islands Development
654 Board, has been to support economic strategies that
632 complement rather than interfere with the functioning of
the crofting township with its small holdings and communal
000 practices. The Harris Tweed industry is lauded as an

105 The Harris Tweed industry is lauded as an
241 industry which is compatible with crofting. Because
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632 weavers are self-employed, they can set their own schedule
of work and thus continue to participate in croft work
and fulfill various township obligations. The effects
[121] of this industry on the township as a social boundary
[434] system were investigated. The income available from
[463] weaving is unpredictable, which encourages the retention
of crofting practices and other patterns of behavior,
such as "occupational pluralism," that were found to be
[476] adaptive in the past. Such strategies also strengthen
[182] township boundaries; for example, they encourage mutual
[434] aid and communal township practices. But weaving also
[407] offers a high level of income; and some weavers, preferring
to spend most of their time weaving, have neglected
crofting, or have invested in tractors or other motorized
transport which enables them to harvest crops, cut peat
and perform other activities independent of other township
members.

105 The fundamentalist Free Church constitutes an important
621 boundary-maintaining mechanism, serving to exclude various
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632 external influences of the larger society from the township.
184 However, a smaller network of persons engaged in the
105 religious sphere of social activity, a subsystem within
794 the township system, also exists which has the appearance
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632 of a firmly bounded system. These are members of the clique
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794 of the converted, who occasionally neglect township and
621 neighborly duties in favor of religious activities. The
632 increase in private transportation during the past 25 years
184 has facilitated the maintenance of closer ties within the
[494] clique. The existence of such a strongly bounded subsystem
is an example of a trend toward the weakening of the
township as a social boundary system, but this trend is
countered by other factors that strengthen or help preserve
the township as a bounded system.

105 People come and go from the township, but this appears
632 to maintain rather than weaken township boundaries because
621 behavior different from that prescribed within the township
166 can be performed outside it, and conformist behavior
184 reassumed upon reentry. Those unable to conform with
standards of behavior prescribed within the township are
not likely to return.

[528] Township members who have settled away from the island
come back periodically for recreation and a sense of
[829] belonging. They increase the value of the township and
its way of life in the eyes of the inhabitants, and provide
them with subject matter for conversation until the next
holiday season, when the exiles again return.

105 The boundedness of the township is thus a qualified
632 boundedness that, over the past 100 years and especially
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184 since the second world war, has decreased in strength but
[178] is nevertheless strong today.

105 is nevertheless strong today. The relatively strong
632 621 boundedness derives from a number of factors. Important
184 among these are economic adaptations to modern conditions,
which consist in part of the retention in modified form
of traditional economic activities in response to various
constraints and incentives presented by larger British
society. Also important are institutionalized bonds of
affect, particularly of kinship and community, and ties
of religious affiliation and identification. These ties
continue to be functionally important in part because of
the geographical and social marginality of the crofting
township. This combination of factors has resulted in
the persistence of a relatively strongly bounded system
which retains distinctive features in an extensively
urbanized and industrialized nation.

B. Theoretical Considerations

121 In the United States, the concept of "peasant" has
provided the main conceptual tool by which rural communi-
ties which are structurally integrated with the larger
nation-state may be studied (cf. Foster 1967, Wolf 1966).
[632] The Scottish crofting township has some of the character-
[621] istics of a closed corporate peasant community (Wolf 1957),
but it is difficult to apply the word "peasant" to such a
000 community. Cultivation for subsistence is minimal, and in

241 Cultivation for subsistence is minimal, and in
654 part stems from government-defined privileges and duties
288 regarding maintenance of a croft. The Harris Tweed
477 industry, which is restricted to the Outer Hebrides and
323 464 thus is protected from competition, has provided work
166 for a large number of islanders. Many of the younger
[434] members of croft families live in cities on the mainland,
and send part of their wages home; they return regularly
[162] to the island, and many plan to retire there. Thus the
[632] township supplies urban workers who remain very much
attached to the rural townships, which are composed of
511 aged family members and a rural proletariat. The standard
454 of living is high, and many crofters have accumulated
273 savings, although much of this surplus is used by the men
for alcoholic drinks.

121 In Britain, rural communities have been interpreted as lying somewhere along a rural-urban continuum (cf. Southall 1959, Frankenberg 1966). In 1959, Southall presented "an operational theory of role" by which he suggested that heterogeneous societies may be analyzed and compared. He developed the concept "density of role texture" to describe societies which lie along a continuum from rural to urban. Frankenberg (1966) uses Southall's concept along with other concepts to present a more complete model of an urban-rural continuum. The "models" of both Southall and Frankenberg are essentially lists

12| of the characteristics of roles in relatively urban or rural settings; for example, urban settings are characterised by a proliferation of narrowly defined, specialized roles. These models are unable to deal with exceptions to the continua, such as unspecialized towns based economically on agriculture, and mechanized agricultural areas. Exceptions may also be found in urban villages, that is, neighborhoods within cities characterized by low geographical mobility, or in ethnic or religious enclaves within urban-industrial settings such as the Hutterite communities in America or the conservative Red Xhosa in Rhodesian cities (Mayer 1961).

Southall (1959) maintains that social theory tends to be either too general or too specific, and that the concept of role offers a "theory of the middle range (Merton 1957)" by which communities or societies of differing complexity may be compared. Specifically, he uses the concept of role to develop a rural-urban continuum. I suggest that Cohen's concept of social boundary system offers a more fruitful and integrated approach to the study of complex societies than does the concept of role _per se_. Cohen makes use of role theory to analyze the boundedness of networks of social relations, but his unit of analysis is the social boundary system rather than the role. By using the concept of social boundary system, it is possible

121 to focus on inter- rather than intra-group relationships. The relationship of a community to the larger society of which it is a part may be investigated not by trying to place it on an urban-rural continuum, but by investigating its state of boundedness. Strong boundedness may result in resistance to innovation, and insularity, even if the community or other network is in the heart of an urban-industrial environment.

Barth (1969) has attempted to understand maintenance of cultural distinctiveness, or boundedness of a sociocultural system, despite the flow of ideas and personnel between systems. This thesis has similar intentions. It attempts to illustrate how a sociocultural environment may produce an apparently anomalous, strongly bounded sociocultural system.

Appendix A

Life Histories

Anna Dhonchaidh

*159 Anna Dhonchaidh was born a few years after the passing
[166] of the Crofters Act in 1886. In 1915, when she was in her
early 20's, she heard that there was a shortage of farm
workers on the mainland because of the war. "I thought
I knew everything. I left this place like a raw potato,
not like today, when the young people leave with their
education." She worked on a farm for nine months, and
[602] then left because she wanted to see Glasgow. Like most
islanders, she had relatives there, who housed her until
*159 she found a job. In remembering her past jobs, she
464 emphasizes the strong personal ties she established with
466 various employers. She got a job as a cook in a nursing
home because she was a friend of one of the nurses. "That
was how the head nurse knew if you would be good for the
job, by who you knew. And the patients loved me. They
crowded around me. I took time with them. I made things
for them."

*159 A severe attack of measles made her decide to return
166 [164] to the country. "I couldn't get back my health, but I

*159 "I couldn't get back my health, but I
[162] didn't want to go home, because the houses weren't so
[362] good there as on the mainland. I went to work on a farm. It was for the cream I was going. I was so weak I couldn't lift the milk pails for a week, but I got on so well with the old lady that the farmer let me stay in and keep her company. The other girls were always running off to dances and out late at night, but I didn't care about that. I stayed in with her, and got so pally with her that the others were jealous."

[166] She had been coming back every winter to be with her mother, and during the war returned to nurse her until she died. Anna then returned to Glasgow, where she married a widower from the mainland. When he died a few years later, she returned permanently to the island. Although
[794] she had not belonged to the Free Church while living in Glasgow, she became a member when she settled permanently in Shawbost.

The Baker

"The Baker" was 22 when the first world war broke
[702] out. Many Shawbost villagers joined branches of the armed services at that time. The Baker joined the army, and two months later was wounded in one lung. Tough as salted dogfish and solid as Lewisian gneiss at the age of 78, he pounds his chest and shows visitors his scar. After

*159 [464] After
being discharged from the army, he married the Shawbost
girl he had been courting, but soon after returned to
Glasgow in search of work. A doctor advised him to quit
the factory job he had found because the dust endangered
his wounded lung. He then attended a technical college
for eighteen months in preparation to set up his own
business, a bakery; and again, his wound defeated him.
A doctor advised him that a bakery filled with flour was
the worst environment imaginable for him, and that he
should go back and work the land on the islands, where
the air was clean. He returned to Lewis and to the
croft, and when his sons were old enough they assisted him
[484] with croft work and weaving. He still makes a yearly trip
to Glasgow.

The Bodach Beag

"The Bodach Beag" is known for his shrewdness,
[166] industriousness, mechanical ability and kindness. He is
one of the many Lewismen who left the island in 1924 on
the ship called the Metagama, and like many others he
returned to the island during the depression. His eldest
brother had survived the sinking of the Iolaire, the ship
returning home with servicemen after the war that sank
not far from the Stornoway harbor in 1919, and was never
well afterwards. "He would sit in at night, off by

#159 himself. If he had a drink he might come out. When the weaving started, he took that up; and he tilled the croft, kept cattle and all that; but socially he was a misfit. It was a terrible tragedy, the Iolaire:"

[402] When the Bodach Beag returned from the United States, he bought a Hattersley loom to replace the old wooden loom with which his brother had been weaving. They worked the croft together. The Bodach Beag knew he would get the croft. He married soon after he returned, and for the next forty years never left the island. His wife took a six-month course in poultry-keeping and milking, and they concentrated on cattle rather than sheep. His wife sold fresh butter to the mobile vans.

#159 594 (167) Their family grew and dispersed. The eldest son attended the secondary school in Stornoway, emigrated to Rhodesia and married an English girl who was working there as a nurse. They had to return when economic earthquakes shook Rhodesia and he lost his job. He stayed at home for a year and built a new house on the croft; and then, unexpectedly, he started work to complete the necessary exams to enter a university and become a teacher.

[166] The youngest son became an engineer, married a Glasgow Highlander whose parents came from Lewis, and settled in Glasgow. Their sister married a tradesman on the mainland. The third son, unmarried but engaged to a local girl, works in the local tweed mill and lives at home with his parents.

Iain the Basher

*159 Hard-drinking and with a bitterness that seems ready to erupt in hostility at any moment, Iain "the Basher" at the age of 70 has enough painful memories locked inside his rawhide-covered heart to interfere with any normal [167] bloodstream. He left the island for the United States on the ship Metagama, but returned during the depression. "I remember a night in New York. It was so hot your feet fried in your shoes. I was walking barefoot, carrying my shoes in my hands. A cat screamed in an alley. I heaved a shoe into the shadows and hit a man who was standing there. He started chasing me, throwing bottles so that they broke in front of me. I had to run through the broken glass in my bare feet. He finally stopped chasing me, but I had to go back--the bloody shoe was still in the alley. He was standing there with some of his chums talking to a policeman. I told them what happened, that I had thrown the shoe at a cat and accidentally hit the man. 'You didn't hit him hard enough,' said the policeman, 'You didn't hit him bloody hard enough."

Iain married twice and had several children, all of whom after his wives' deaths were raised by his sister, who never married. He was drunk the night his first wife died [164] in childbirth. His second wife died of cancer, and soon afterwards he set fire to his house. The insurance company

The insurance company
*159 paid him L600, and the pubs let him drink half of that
[945] before he even got the money. The house, in which he continues to live, stands as it was left by the fire, with walls blackened, blistered and bare.

Uilleam Glen

Uilleam, named after the owner of a fishing boat on which he used to serve as a crew member, is the 70-
[592] year-old head of a croft household. He came from a family of four sons and two daughters. He was not the eldest son but he was his father's favorite. Before his father died he built the house in which he presently stays so that he would have some claim to the croft. The eldest brother was sailing, and upon his return he married a girl with a croft. Uilleam Glen made his living from the croft—he had a reputation for being good with livestock—and from occasional wage labor in Storhoway; he also followed the fishing.

Another brother of Uilleam Glen married into another croft in Shawbost, after serving in World War I as a sailor, and a sister married a boy from a neighboring
[167] village. The youngest brother, Murdo, emigrated to the United States with the second sister, and they lived and worked together in Detroit until the depression drove them home again. They then lived with Uilleam Glen, who had

#159 married a neighboring girl only shortly before they returned, and all of them started weaving. Murdo and his sister had lived together for many years and were quite close. Her marriage at the age of 55 surprised and dismayed the family. Murdo, still a bachelor, lives on in the house.

[592] Uilleam Glen had six children. His eldest son, Iain Uilleam Glen, spent a brief period in the navy during the war, but since then has not left the island. He lives with his father, weaves, and is largely responsible for maintaining the croft. They keep cattle, and a number of sheep. Several years ago Iain reseeded a buaile which his grandfather had before him, which he uses to graze cattle. When he was in his early 30's, to everyone's surprise he married a woman ten years older than himself, who gave him a son. The only other member of the household is the youngest son of the family, Calum Uilleam Glen, who weaves and earns money during the summer by hauling peat, hay, and corn. Calum once took a six-month course in carpentry sponsored by the Labor Exchange, but has never used his trade. Two sisters are married on the island. Another brother jumped ship in Australia, married, and has never returned home.

Uilleam Glen's fourth son, Padruig Uilleam Glen, spent a number of years in a sanitorium with lung problems, and

*159 did not receive much schooling. He stayed at home for a long time, helping his brothers with the crofting and weaving, and working at the nearby dairy. For a time the brothers made concrete blocks for sale, and ran a [166] lorry. In his late 30's and still single, Padruig went to the mainland, where he takes on various driving jobs, returning home periodically.

Seonag Thormoid

*159 166 464 Seonag Thormoid left the island in 1933 at the age of 16 to work in the hotels. Her mother had worked in domestic service before the first world war. "You were raised with the idea that you would go away. I've prepared my children for the same thing. Any work that exists here is temporary. You can't depend on it. Even though things have been good since the war, they're getting bad now."

Seonag went to Glasgow with three other girls from Shawbost, and stayed with her aunt until she found a job. "Jobs were very difficult to get, and the wages were low. These were the depressed years, which didn't pick up until [465] just before the war. I earned L2/10 a month working for a Mrs. Smith. You could buy shoes then for 12/6, but that was a week's wages. The richer families in Glasgow had five or six servants. You were treated like scum.

*159 166 464 You ate terrible food at the same time that you were preparing excellent food for them. So many of those large houses have been broken down now into smaller flats. The prices are higher today, but the wages are higher, too. I heard recently," she said with a quiet, satisfied smile, "that Mrs. Smith can only afford a girl for three hours a day now."

Seonag moved from one job to another. She thought about becoming a nurse, but the pay was so poor. A friend of hers did so, but had the help of two maiden aunts in Glasgow. "The only nursing that paid good wages was mental nursing. I tried it, but I didn't like being harsh with the patients."

*159 She married in 1944, after her fiance, Calum Ban, returned from the war. They had known each other all their lives. She had spent long periods of time at home between jobs. He was the second son and fourth child in the family, and got the croft because he had been taking care of his parents. The first son and eldest child in the family had emigrated to the United States but returned during the depression and built a house on the common grazing land. Another brother married into a croft in a neighboring village, and the fourth brother settled in Glasgow. A sister married a policeman in Glasgow, who came from the island, and another sister married in Shawbost.

*159 The third sister worked in domestic service in Glasgow all her life and never married.

Calum Ban had joined the Naval Reserve before the war. "There was always a sign up in the Stornoway Labor Exchange for men to join the Naval Reserve, because the islanders were such good seamen. They were fishermen or had been in the Merchant Service." Calum was in the navy for five years during the war, and became "skunnered" of
*159 (tired of) the sea. He is very interested in sheep, and
233 knows their major earmarks or brands between here and Ness.
422 "The earmarks identify tribes of people. The Macleods have a particular mark, like a slice at the base of the right ear; the other marks were added as the families divided and subdivided so that the relationship between them was lost. Even though you can't calculate the relationship, you know you were once part of the Macleods that put that original mark on; you can see it all in the ear marks."

*159 Calum also raises bullocks, without keeping a cow.
233 He buys young bulls at cattle sales, and sells them after two or three years. But recently his back has given him a lot of trouble, and he has had to limit his crofting activities.

*159 Seonag and Calum Ban have four children. The eldest is in the Merchant Service, and the second son is a teacher. A daughter is studying domestic science in

*159 Aberdeen. All the children were encouraged to get as much education as they possibly could. "I worked so hard in domestic service," says Seonag, "I wanted my children never to have to do the same kind of work. Anna is starting her first summer job in a hotel in [873] England. She's just finished six years at the Nicolson [the secondary school in Stornoway, which is attended by all town children and by rural children who have scored well on examinations which they take at the age of 11 or 12]. She finds the work very hard, from 5:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. She said on the phone the other night she was glad she had a good education and wouldn't have to do this all her life." Anna is the youngest of the family. She wants to study French and German at a university in Aberdeen, which would involve spending a year on the European continent.

"I would rather live in a city," says Seonag. "I would pack up and leave the island tonight. But my husband would never leave. He's much too involved with the croft."

"Leave the island?" says Anna. "Of course. I've always had the idea that I was going away."

Mairi Inis Dubh

Mairi Inis Dubh is in her late 20's, and lives with her husband and baby son in a house built recently on the

*159 common grazing land in Shawbost. She is the third of three sisters and has a younger, unmarried brother who lives at home with their mother. The eldest sister married a Scottish tradesman and lives in the United States. The second sister lives with her mother, as her husband comes and goes from the sea.

Mairi grew up wanting to be a nurse, although she had also considered being a missionary. She worked for [166] awhile in a hospital in Stornoway, and then went to Edinburgh for three years to train as a nurse. "I was glad to get away from home, away from the restrictions. I wanted to live a good life, to have fun. I had enough money to spend. I could spend it as I liked. I didn't like to come home. It was so dull and cold.

*159
781 "But the more I drank and smoked and went to parties and dances, the emptier I felt. One night I was at a dance. I had chipped in with some friends and we bought a bottle. Suddenly it seemed to me that I was getting deeper and deeper in sin, and I promised that if I got home from the dance I would try and correct my ways. I went home and prayed, and was converted."

*159 She had met her husband at a dance when she was home for a visit soon after she started nurse's training. He was sailing, and he returned to sea for three years so they would have enough money to marry. When he returned, *159 he tried to persuade Mairi to emigrate to Australia, but she would not consider it. They lived for a while with relatives in Shawbost, until he built a house for them on the common grazing land.

*159 829 "I remember my mother talking about the tigh ceilidh, how people would gather to talk, and the girls would sit around combing each others' hair. It was a good life. Today things are going too fast. There are so few places left that offer peace. Many young people want to leave here, but they usually come back in ten years' time. I never want to leave."

Katrina Bheag

*159 781 "I sit there in church expecting to be hit by the curam, like lightning. I always go with my next-door neighbor, Maletta. Up until a year ago she was going to parties and drinking, but then she started going with a new crowd, the religious folk. She just changed one crowd for another. She kept the party crowd going for awhile as well, she couldn't decide which she preferred. But now she sees me and asks, 'How are you?' I say, 'Fine.' She says, 'How can you be fine if you haven't got Christ?' So now I sit in church with her up at the front, with both her and the minister brainwashing me. She keeps telling me about all the people that have been converted

* 159 781 recently, like the boy in Ness who decided he wasn't going to church. He was sitting there reading, heard a knock at the door and didn't go. It came again, so he went and opened the door—there was no one there. Then the voice of God spoke to him, and the next Wednesday he went to prayer meeting. He probably felt guilty about not going to church. I would have been just plain scared.

* 159 781 829 "Something's wrong with the reasons why people get converted. When someone dies, someone is sure to get converted. When something terrible happens, someone gets the curam. If one person gets it, other members of the family start to get it. Take Iain Mhurchaidh in the next street, for example; his wife converted, so he's trying. But he took a drink the other day, and had to eat an onion so his wife wouldn't notice; and when he hurt his hand in the garage the other day, he swore like a sailor. Usually people marry people the same as they are. It's usually the woman who converts afterwards. The curamach people say they're so fond of each other that they could marry any one of them. That's the best way to get a husband if you're an old maid. And a few affairs have gotten started at the prayer meetings they hold in each others' houses. I've never seen a really holy person. They'll try to cheat you as fast as the next person.

"Once you start 'following,' you can't really stop. Once you've given the sign that you're a follower, everyone

*159 is watching. My boyfriend tells me that I shouldn't go
781 to church regularly and then all of a sudden show up in
829 a pub on Saturday night. It confuses people. The Bible
says you can't have two masters.

"There are only two kinds of people in this village. You're either curamach or you're not. If you get the curam, all of a sudden you've got a lot of friends. If you had a friend who got the curam, all of a sudden she's no longer your friend. She just asks you if you've prayed today, and acts like she's feeling sorry for you. If your parents are curamach and your father is an elder, you've got it made in this place. Domhnuill Iain Dasher's daughter was as slim and beautiful as a model but she was never chosen as Miss West Side at the dances. Her father wasn't a member of the church. He always spoke his mind, and people called him an idiot.

*159 "There are definite symptoms of conversion. A person
781 who's been looking bored in church suddenly begins to pay
attention. The women go all weepy. The men sigh. They wait around outside the church and don't leave so quickly. You can see them shaking hands with the converted. You can predict their conversion months in advance.

*159 "I had a dream last year, of a line of people going
781 down the aisle of the church, all dressed in white like to
787 a wedding. Only they weren't wearing veils. I realized

*159 later that these were all people who eventually got the
781 curam. The only conversion I didn't expect was Norrie
787 Bheag. I saw her one night crying outside the church,
and knew her time had come.

"In the dream I was at the very end of the line, only I wasn't wearing a white dress. I was naked, and kept trying to cover myself.

*159 "Not a day passes that I don't think of death. I
781 want to pray, but I don't know who to pray to. I've been
[761] going to church regularly now, sort of hoping and sort of
being afraid that I'll find the answer. I've read too much, and I met too many kinds of people while I was working in Glasgow. I didn't live near other people from Shawbost when I was in Glasgow. I got to know Jews, tinkers, Catholics, and Jehovah's Witnesses. The world is full of different religions. I believe that you can convert to a religion, from to Buddhism or to Christianity, but not to a church like the Free Church or the Church of Scotland. This place is called Tir an t-soisgeul where the true gospel is preached, but the whole world should be called that."

Ruaridh Dan

*159 Ruaridh Dan was married in January and began to work
288 as a warper in the Shawbost mill the following October,
just after the end of World War II. He had been weaving

*159 288 with his brother-in-law, but they had only one loom. At that time the mill was buying yarn from other mills in town, warping it on the mill presmises, and sending it to the weavers together with the yarn for the weft.

Ruaridh heard through the grapevine that more warpers were wanted at the time, and went to ask "the old man, Coinneach Rod, himself," about the possibility of his [465] getting the job. He worked with five other warpers, who averaged five warps a day, at four shillings each. They were paid by piece work rather than on an hourly basis, and received payment once monthly.

Business was going very well. The mill was receiving large orders from America. A few more warpers were hired. [458] A slump came in 1948, and Ruaridh Dan and several others were laid off. Ruaridh went to work for a building contractor, but was called back to the mill after a month's time.

*159 444 After warping for several years, he started work in the yarn store, which dispensed yarn to the weavers. "I was checking the yarn that was going out to the weavers, weighing the wefts, checking the colors that were used, keeping a record so we could tell at a glance what stock we had, how much we would require for any further orders we would get. Well, the job got to a stage where I just couldn't manage it, and I protested. Another man started to work with me. I was paid a regular wage so it was a

*159 444 better job than the warping, but sometimes I had to work on a Saturday.

"We were cultivating the croft, but we still needed money. It was bad being paid by the month. You'd have
[452] a book at the grocer's, and pay at the end of the month. Of course, at that time your boss was your merchant."

Other slumps followed the one in 1948. During two
*159 288 458 such periods in the 50's, some of the men employed by the mill were kept on the payroll doing odd jobs that had little to do with the mill, such as building a garden wall around the mill owner's house, painting for him, and deepening the drains on his croft. In 1963, seventeen people were laid off.

"I was drawing unemployment benefits, and my sons had
[745] started weaving. We decided to build a new house, to start in the summer. The month before we were going to start, six months after I was laid off, I was sent for and asked if I would go on one of the looms as a pattern weaver. I said I couldn't manage it at all. I had a bad leg and couldn't stand up to weaving for long periods, and, in any case, I said, I'm going to start a new house next month. He said that's all right, as soon as you finish the house there'll be a job available for you. When I went back to him in 1965, he didn't actually have any work for me at
*159 288 the time, but he took me on anyway. In 1965 the new

#159
288 mill was just about completed and some of the machinery had started arriving. This was the job he gave me, cleaning the machinery, getting it ready for the fitters and engineers to come and put them together. When they really opened up, I was to start at the teaser, in the blending department. I didn't know anything about the job. He told me I would have to go to one of the mills in Stornoway and learn how to work the machinery. And this I did. I went for a fortnight to Newalls. Shawbost and Newalls were shareholders in each others' businesses. That's where the Shawbost tweeds were cleaned and finished. Even today we do some of their urgent orders when they've got too much to handle to meet the deadline.

"After I had this training I taught anyone else who started, like Bochag, after he came back from the army he started with me. It wasn't Bochag who came to look for a job. They went after him because he had worked in a mill in town before he went into the army. They also went after two lads who had been working for years in the finishing department in Newalls, paid them more to get them to come, and over and above that, they were collected every morning and taken home every night. They want people who have worked at the mills in town.

"But as for its being a permanent job, it's difficult to say. Most of the women start working in the mill after

*159 288 they leave school, and most of them get married. I
remember about twenty girls working there, and they all
[468] got married, and another young girl would start. During
the slack periods some men would be paid off. They
would start in other jobs, and wouldn't be prepared to
*159 464 come back. If you weren't working in the mill you were
weaving; there was road work on a very small scale.
Except for sailing there was nothing else. For the last
ten years or so the big contractors have given people jobs.

"I started with a building contractor but preferred
to come back to this job, for the main reason that I had
*159 288 458 built this house here. We had slack periods, but we
picked up again. But this slack period, it's been two
years now, and I don't think it will pick up again,
unless they go to a wider cloth. Probably the fashion
has changed. People have gone on to other types of cloth.
And the merchants and tailors prefer a wider cloth, it's
less waste. But that means changing the loom and a lot
of machinery in the mill as well.

"I'm sure the weavers wouldn't be prepared to put
[435] out the extra cost for wider looms. At the present time,
a loom and winding machine cost close to L400. You can
imagine what a wider loom would cost, up to L1,000. They
don't want the power loom. They're trying to hold onto
the Orb trademark for as long as they can. That's the big

*159 288 458 question, whether it would be better to change from the Orb trade and go to power looms. Then you would be able to do any kind of cloth. You wouldn't be tied down to regulations as you are with the Harris Tweed. To do that after all it cost them with the court case a few years back—. But, at the same time, it's more important to have work than this trademark. As it is at the moment, it's just a white elephant."

Neilie Leoid

*159 Neilie Leoid left school in 1931 at the age of 14, as easy-going and generally content with things then as he is 40 years later. "When I was going to school lots of people hated the headmaster, but I had no complaints against him. Perhaps people are inclined to blame other people for their own failures. Of course, I didn't like school very much, and I didn't go to it all that often.

"In those days you didn't have the same access to education as the young people have today. You didn't *159 288 [868] assume you could go very high. You were quite content to settle down to weaving. The boys started learning from anyone who was around. I started weaving with my uncle [434] [435] when I was 15, on an old wooden loom. In one winter we earned the L26 to buy a single-shuttle automatic. My uncle's eyesight was getting sort of dim, so I would

*159 288 stand beside him as he pedalled, and yell 'Stop!' when the bobbin was about to run out. By post-war, the single-shuttles were gone. Most men had the six-shuttle box.

*159 706 "It was all the rage then to join the Naval Reserve. You got a free trip every now and again to the south of England, and thirty shillings a month retainer. I was sailing for about 18 months before I was called up to the war.

"I was in the war for a full six years. I liked to visit every place, but I preferred the white countries. I didn't like Africa or India. China wasn't so bad. Russia was awful. It was cold, and there was nothing you could buy.

"You made very good friends on board ship. You never forgot the face of a man you served with. Most of them were English. I felt very awkward at first with English. I was very slow translating Gaelic into English, not eloquent at all. The English had the gift of the gab. But I got used to this."

*159 Neilie became engaged to marry a Shawbost girl soon after his return to the village but the marriage did not take place for a number of years because his intended wife had to raise the children of her invalid sister. During the year of their marriage he built a new house. His

*159 wife was religiously converted a few years later. They have no children. Neilie Leoid occasionally goes to the hotel in Carloway for a drink, and enjoys reading adventure stories on Sunday. He is very interested in sheep.

"Sailing made you content to settle down. You had seen it all. After the war many could have easily qualified for civil service jobs, but they didn't bother. They were quite happy to settle down to the weaving. No young person now wants to weave, but I think we were none the worse for it."

Cailean Leobhar

[771] Cailean Leobhar is a religious skeptic, but he reads the Bible as though it were an encyclopedia that referred to all important events in human history. He reads widely and omnivorously, and often delights in confusing people by jumping from one topic to another. [827] His people are said to be scholars. "It's in the blood."

"You can find references to all of human history in the Bible, from the creation to present times. Zarathustrianism had a great influence on Christianity. You can see that in the Book when the Jews entered Babylon. We were raised on the Bible; it's the ministers and schoolteachers alike that stamped out the old Celtic

#159 mythology. But the Celts still kept their special characteristics, like second sight.

"But who in this place talks about Zarathustra? I feel so ignorant. I've always read, and never believed anything. I guess I can thank the previous schoolmaster for making me a rebel. He used to give me at least four straps a day, because I was clever and his kids were dumb. It was a poor county, and there were only two bursaries available to send country children to the Nicolson. He outfoxed us, and his two children went. They didn't last there long, though.

#159
829 "So whenever I see those big schoolmasters with their fancy speeches, all I can think of is what corruption lies behind the scenes. The only people that ever know what's really going on are the fools and drunks. Everybody thinks they're drunk, so they go ahead and act naturally, or tell their terrible secrets. But the drunks are watching. They see something wrong and they have to come and tell someone, and for some reason they come to me. That always happens to me at weddings and wakes."

#159 Cailean was a middle child of a large family. The eldest sibling worked as a policeman for awhile in naval dockyards, and then returned home and tried to start a small business. When it failed, he tried weaving for a time, and then returned to Glasgow to work as a security

*159 guard in a shipyard. A brother and sister married into crofts within the village, and another sister married a mainlander whom she met at a dance while working in [888] domestic service. Cailean and a younger brother stayed together after the war, looking after their aged parents.

"The war was the biggest even in my life. I spent six and a half of the best years of my life fighting for survival. During wartime you had no future. That's where most of the men learned to drink. When you got into a port, you drank like hell. You got lectured on VD, but you knew you were going to die anyway. The only thing you lived for was sleep. You spent 24 hours on duty, keyed up and waiting for the enemy to come. When you got off duty the bombs could be screaming around you, but you slept. You got greedy. You were hungry for anything. So when you got into port on leave, you did everything for excitement. I spent one of my leaves recovering from a motorcycle accident. There's nothing to think about here; so I keep on the move, after sheep on the moor, or repairing things. It keeps me occupied. It keeps me from drinking."

Cailean was well skilled in electrical repair work, and earned trade papers during his military service. Toward the end of the war he was working in South Africa, with full intentions of staying permanently. "But I threw

*159 it over. All of a sudden I knew I had to get back. I drove everybody crazy trying to get a ship back as soon as possible. And the day I arrived in a British port, my brother--the one who had been staying with my parents--left the island. Over all those miles, did they somehow let me know? I don't know. It's best not to talk about it.

"I was going to leave the island the first year after I got back. I didn't like the weaving. But it's hard to leave parents who are old. I was caught here by circumstance. I was trained not to think of the future. I kept busy. I built the house myself, learning to do the bricklaying and joinery work as I went along. The weaving isn't too bad, except you have to be careful you don't earn too [651] much, or you'll end up in the poorhouse. I had to pay L90 in tax this year. The tweeds don't come regularly, especially for the last 18 months, but that's not so bad because the vans give you credit. You don't need money all the time. The worst thing is the drink. Some people can live on L5 a week and a Bible, but I can't."

Cailean's brother lived with him for years. They kept a lot of sheep and shared the weaving. Their father died and then their mother died after a long illness. As though the most important tie to the island had been broken, Cailean's brother then left the island, taking advantage of a six-month course offered by the Labor Exchange. He

*159 then married a girl from the mainland and settled near Glasgow. "There's another croft still in his name. I take hay off it for the lambs. But he might want to retire there."

The most important part of the year for Cailean is the summer, when the relatives return. During that time, the large empty house which he built is full again. The women clean out the cupboards, throw out an accumulation of whiskey bottles, and repaper the walls.

"I like cities. I'll probably go there in another two years. That's how long I give the tweed industry, and the time left before the islands are cleared because of the rising taxes. Besides, all the important people are away from here anyway; and I'm not sure how I can live through another long, lonely winter.

"But I would hate to start out again, being knocked around. It's comfortable here. The house would be worth L6,000 if it were in a different location, but I wont' get what it's worth. This place has about had it, but I've invested so much of my life here. I haven't developed my brain in any way. It's too late to start thinking now."

Appendix B

Number of Yards of Harris Tweed Stamped per Year With the Harris Tweed "Orb" Mark

(Harris Tweed Association Ltd.)

288
433
178

Year	Yards
1934	95,241
1935	1,485,246
1936	2,331,740
1937	3,682,775
1938	2,897,104
1939	3,987,676
1940	4,188,822
1941	3,201,137
1942	2,212,816
1943	1,722,307
1944	1,928,393
1945	2,195,423
1946	3,049,680
1947	3,967,920
1948	4,463,713
1949	4,101,029
1950	3,779,570
1951	2,799,774
1952	4,034,351
1953	4,929,898
1954	5,150,333
1955	5,840,158
1956	6,623,529
1957	6,328,043
1958	4,348,453
1959	6,200,000
1960	5,410,000
1961	4,954,090
1962	5,081,407
1963	5,556,426
1964	5,901,800
1965	6,587,555
1966	7,600,000
1967	5,490,000
1968	6,700,000
1969	6,948,542
1970	5,120,000

Appendix C

Balance Sheet of a Croft

*159 "The Muillear" has one croft and a two-acre buaile.
241 In 1970 he planted one-eighth of an acre with three bags
244 433 of potatoes, two of which he bought for L14/16, and
[435] harvested 22 hundredweights. This was sufficient for
his family's needs and provided some feed for his livestock for all but two months of the year. A small plot is planted with cabbages, for domestic consumption.

[311] Seven-eighths of an acre is planted with oats; one-
[246] and-a-half acres with grass and hay; and two acres
[233] are used for rough grazing.

*159 The Muillear is interested in new ideas and techniques.
232 He goes to meetings and discussion groups sponsored by the
233 North of Scotland College of Agriculture, and has bought
prize rams from the mainland to improve his flock. He tries to raise a few sheep using techniques of good husbandry rather than a large flock which would be given less effective care. He is teased by other crofters for "over-feeding," and for keeping his sheep on the croft and the township reseeding rather than out on the moor. "His sheep get homesick when they get out of sight of the croft." He wins the prizes at the Carloway Cattle Show each year, in a

*159 232 233 quietly triumphant yet unassuming way. He does not kill any of his sheep for home consumption.

*159 241 288 434 His involvement with the croft is a "hobby" because its output does not compare with the income he receives from weaving. Whereas he might make as much as L100 from his crofting activities, his income from weaving averages [651] L7-800 a year. As a married man, he can earn as much as L848 without paying income tax.

*159 233 434 654 **Income:**

Sheep:	L27/--	(three sheep sold to the slaughterhouse in Stornoway)
	1/16	("Fat Sheep Subsidy" for the three sheep that were sold)
	16/10	(Subsidy of 12 shillings each for 11 shearlings and six sheep)
	22/10	(Prize money from the Carloway Cattle Show)
	12/10	(Three lambs sold locally)
	12/ 8	(Fourteen fleece sold to the Wool Marketing Board, at an average of 3/11 per pound, or about 17/6 per fleece. The island tweed mills pay only 2/5 per pound. He has been sending his fleece to the Board for two years. Many crofters prefer not to bother with the Board, and sell their fleece to the mills. They are the only sheep-owners in Britain who have this option, because of the location of the Harris Tweed mills on the islands. But as of 1970-71, the mills refused to buy fleece.)
	L90/14	

*159 233 236 434

*159 233 434 654

Cattle:	L28/--	(Calf sold)
	11/ 5	(Subsidy for the calf)
	18/ 5	(Subsidy for the cow)
	L57/10	
Total:	L165/14	

*159
435
246

[429]
[407]
[241]
[654]

Costs:

L50/—	(Fodder used from December to August; a hundredweight bag costing L2/14 is used almost every two weeks. Other crofters do not use this much.)
8/—	(Stack of oats)
6/ 8	(Oat seed for 7/8 acres)
6/—	(Tractor hired)
9/—	(Six hundredweights of fertilizer for oats and grass. For a cropping grant of L17/10, three hundredweights of fertilizer must be put on each acre of hay.)
L79/ 8	

*159
434
435

Income:	L165/14	
Costs:	79/ 8	
Profit:	L 86/ 6	(or about L2 back for every L1 he invested)

*159
434

Net cash income or profit from the croft thus represents 9% to 10% of his gross earnings from weaving. If computed as cash, uncalculated income from the croft in the forms of garden vegetables and milk products would raise the croft income by L30 to L40. In those households that consume their own sheep, the croft contributes an even greater amount.

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airidh--see *sheiling*

banais--wedding dinner and dance following the church service

bannag--a party associated with New Year's Eve

boll--any of various old units of capacity used in Scotland, varying from 2 to 6 Winchester bushels

bothan--a shelter, whether a hut or old bus, etc., separate from the rest of the village, where men gather to drink alcoholic liquor (see pp. 153-156)

bramar--sweetheart

brose--a dish made by pouring boiling liquid on meal (as oatmeal) and stirring it

buaile--units of land not recognized as part of the croft and not included in the land for which rent was paid, but recognized as property by the villagers to the extent that this land could be transmitted through families or given by one person to another

caraid no h-oidhche--"companion of the night," the male visitor in the *ruith na h'oidhche*

ceilidh--visit

crowdie--clotted sour milk

cuddy--originally a supper due from a tenant to his lord or chief, hence a rent or gift instead of this; a bribe

curam--conversion; being careful or circumspect

curamach--the "clique of the converted"

fank--the process of bringing the sheep in from the moor, to the wooden pen into which the sheep were gathered and there claimed by their owners

firlote (firlot)--any of various old Scottish units of dry capacity equal to 1/4 boll or from 1/2 to 1 1/2 Winchester bushels
nissen hut--a barrel-shaped prefabricated shelter of corrugated iron with a cement floor
orduighean--religious communions
posadh--church service, associated with marriage
ruith no h-oidhche--night visiting, a form of bundling
sheiling--tiny stone structures used by herders while tending their cattle or sheep
siarach (west-sider)--someone from the west side of Lewis, used by people of Stornoway to refer to them; connotes rusticity
tigh fhaire--"house of watching"; the wake for the dead
waulking--the process by which wool cloth was washed and shrunk

797
573
575

[For information on the curamach (the "clique of the converted"), see category 794.]

1: Parman

484

[For further information on travel, such as for vacations, see category 528; or for work on the mainland, see category 166.]

794

[For information on parishes, see categories 631 and 632.]

[For further information on land use by crofters, see categories 233 and 311.]

[For further information on parishes, see category 632.]

[For information on the various commissions involved in land tenure and its reform, see category 656.]

233
311

[For further information on land use by crofters, see category 241.]

795

[For admission of new members to the Free Church in Shawbost, by the process of communion, see categories 794 and 796.]

1: Parman

ES10 Highland Scots ES10

159

[For life history materials of various members of the Shawbost community, see category 116, pp. 193-223.]

[For further information on land tenure, see category 632.]

[For further information on parishes, see category 631.]